

Dem. Prof. Dem. S. J. Bibl. Con

THE
MIRROVR
of Created Perfection.

OR
The Life of the most Blessed
VIRGIN MARY
Mother of God.

*Written by the R. Fa. J. F. of the
Society of IESVS*

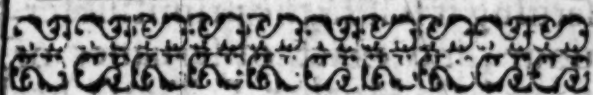


Permissu Superiorum. 1632.

THE
MIRROR
of Great Britain

OR
THE LIST OF THE
VIRGIL
OF THE
OF THE





TO THE
VERTVOVS
AND

RELIGIOVS SISTER,
AGNES ROSENDALE
NOW CALLED

*Sister Agnes of S. Albers, natitie of
Brabant, & Religious in the
Monastery of English Car-
melines at Antwerpe.*

 Ovs gracious good-
nes in calling you
not only to a Reli-
gious life in general,
but to this particular
Order, so eminently flourishing
in Christs Church, & very House
likewise where now you live, cō-

THE EPISTLE

seruing it self in the primitiue feruour, and exact obseruance of your holy Mother *S. Teresa* her Rule, to edify by your holy example, and help also by your temporall meanes poore Exiles, and Strangers; seemeth equally to argue Gods fatherly care of them, and speciall loue to your Selfe: clayming withall thankfull respects from their English friends, and from my self in particuler, as hauing had the fauour affoorded me, of holding your Heauenly spouse in my hands, whilst by your Profession, you espoused your selfe so ioyfully, and deuoutly vnto him, as to me and others then present, the ioy of your Nuptialls, seemed to haue byn, in heauen, and in earth, celebrated togeather.

And indeed the diuine Author of your vocation seemed then to

haue

DEDICATORY.

haue much pleased himfelfe, in beholding his Graces so effectually in you, as it may wel be doubted, whether you imbraced them more feruorously at first, or put them in executiō more heroically afterwards, when deafe to contrary persuaſiōs of your worldly friends, and dexterously freed from that domesticall, and vniust Captiuity, whereby they had for some moneths togeather, forcibly restrayned you, getting alone to the Monastery, and well assured, that the doore thereof would not, but with some better allowance of your powerfull friends, be opened to receaue you (as the Reuerend Mother & Religious of themselves exceedingly desired) with an heroicall resolution, scarcely to be exemplified, you pulled of your secular rich cloathes, put your selfe in-

THE EPISTLE

to a small Wheele, seruing (as
the manner is) to take in and out
things needfull for the inclosed,
left at that tyme by a rare chance
vnlocked, and so turned your
self into the place you desired, by
such a strange meanes, as it no
lesse amazed the Reuerend Mo-
ther, and Sisters to see a person of
your knowne quality, kneeling
almost naked before them, with
flowing teares begging their ho-
ly habit, then it ioyed your selfe
to haue gotten in so among them:

For surely to me, and others
since, this entry of yours seemed
almost miraculous, the straytnes
of the Wheele, deuided into
foure parts, and your tall stature
considered; the deuise at least, &
your manner of executing it, was
(I doubt not) diuinely suggested
and not without a mystery per-
formed, as the Religious mā prea

ching

DEDICATORY.

ching the day after your profession, in a great Auditory of your owne friends, and other principall persons, well noted, when as he tould them, that Christ in his spirituall espousall of you, was pleased to obserue in a sort, what he had formerly commaunded to the Iewish Captaines, and souldiars, in marrying their beautifull captiues, *Deut. 21.* by not admitting you, captiued by loue vnto him, amongst his other pure spouses, there louely and beloued by him, but stripped first of secular garments, and made ready to haue a holier Habit put vpon you, exteriorly course, but interiorly gracing you, in the eyes and hart of your diuine Louer, with the hidden bewties of holy soules chiefly delighted: wherein, I daresay, you are not meane, amongst such as are excellent, so

THE EPISTLE

far, as an immaculate purity of mind and body, with an ingenuous candor of Nature, innocency of Life, admirable Humility, and a continuall ardour of diuine loue, often interrupting, and hindring whole nights together, the needfull repose of your senses, may argue deepe foundations laid of high buildings likely heereafter, by the heavenly Architect, to be raysted in you, and his Blessed Mother, a continuall Leader and Helper of such pure soules into the bride-roome, and inmost bed-chamber of her sonne, there to be embraced graciously by him.

Wherefore I haue purposely heer collected her Life, a cleere Mirror & Rule of all perfection, as *S. Ambrose* calleth it, & dedicated it, as a sincere testimony of my Religious respect, vnto you, and

that

DEDICATORY.

that holy family; that English gentelwomen also, hapning by this occasion to read this history of your exemplar Vocation to Religion, and feruourous prosecution thereof (rather touched by me indeed, then fully related) may learne therby, how to leaue worldly friends, and temptations behind them, to enioy abroad, such sweet retyrements, & strait imbracings of their Heauenly Spowse, as their owne Homes cannot now affoord them.

Neither haue they to this purpose, your Example alone, but the like also in many other eminent Gentle-women of our nation, who haue trampled secular Braueryes, neglected Worldly contentments and preferments, left their Country, and forsaken the delicacyes of their Parents houses, to enter into seuerall mo-

THE EPISTLE

nasteries abroad, as into so many Bride-chambers of their heavenly spouse, temporally first to serue, and eternally afterwards to enioy him; who lightneth his burden layd on them so by abundant graces, and sweetneth his yoke by heavenly consolations, as they feele not almost the apprehended austerities of a Religious life; but contrarily find such a peacefull sweetnes of consciēce, in the practise of them, as S. Bernards saying is truly verified in them, who speaking of secular iudgments made concerning the paynefulness of Religious discipline, *Crucis vident, consolationes non agnoscunt*; they looke vpon our crosses, but know not our cōforts: this being (sayth S. Gregory) the difference, *inter delicias cordis & corporis*, between the delights of the soule and the body,

that

DEDICATORY.

that these latter are vehemently apprehended, but by being experienced quickly come to be loathed: whereas contrarily the other, are dully apprehended, but delightfully tasted, *tantoque à comedente amplius esuriuntur, quanto & ab esuriens amplius comeduntur*, and by being more greedily eaten, they come to be more hungerly longed after: so as the Prophet biddeth vs first to tast, and then to see, how sweet God is, to his children and seruants.

I may well rake your self amōg the happy enioyers of such heavenly delights, since your liuing in that place hath byn as a continuall sitting at a full Table of them; & austerities there apprehended indeed to be farre greater, then young tender gentlewomen in experience find them, haue (as I haue byn eertaynely

in-

THE EPISTLE

informed) byn no more felt by you, then bitter pills wrapped in sugar, come to be tasted by such as sodainely swallow them.

Shall I say (& perchance truly) Gods gracious fauors to haue bin the greater towards you, for leauing in a sort your Country and friends, as your companions haue actually done theirs, by liuing so amongst strangers in it, as if you were quite out of it? If it be so, you are worthily to esteeme (as to my knowledge you do) your pregnant Vocation to that House, a singular grace of God; and your Admission therein, a particuler fauour, commonly denied by the Religious of our nation, who are knowne in all places to refuse strangers, albeit very worthy persons, amongst the, as I for my part therby conceaue the odour of their holy Exam-

ple

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ple to be very sweet, and pleasing to God, it being able so to attract strangers, diuinely also guided, vnto them.

*Your deuoted poore Friend, and
Seruant in Christ IESVS.*

I. F.

The Authours Preface, to
the B. Virgin.

O Most pure, & gracious Mother
of my heavenly Redeemer; whilst
in these Papers, I have sought to ex-
presse thy Greatnes, I have seemed
to my selfe, as one sayling, with
a small Cock-boat, in a vast Ocean,
or labouring with single sandes, to
rayse a high mountayne: He indeed,
knowing the least who thinketh him-
selfe able to comprehend thee, Perfect
in thy nature, Sacred in thy Office,
Complete in thy Graces, and now
Wonderfull in thy glorious Perfecti-
ons; imitating thy Sonnes Vertues
most, as being more, then all other
Saintes, stored with his Goodnes, a-
blest to see our necessities, readiest to
aske remedies for them, and power-
fullest from him, who will deny thee

The Preface.

nothing, to obtayne them.

I offer heere, the slender fruites
of my poore Prayers, to thy Selfe, the
gracious subiect of them; ayming at
no other end in them, then some in-
crease of Denotion towards thee, in
such, as shall read them. Which I
aske also for my selfe, as a far greater
blessing, then I can merit any wayes
by them.

The

The Authours Petition.

VAST Sea of Glory, who art
blest

With an Eternall Calme, rayse
in my brest

Tempests of Sorrow, stormes of
sighes,

Let waues of teares breake
through myne eyes,

That they may quench, ere life
is done,

The dreadfull wrath of thy deare
Sonne.

THE



THE LIFE OF
THE BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY.

*Of our Blessed Ladyes high, and
holy Pedigree.*

CHAP. I.

THOSE texts of the
new Testamēt, wher-
in the Mother of
God is mentioned,
are not vnfitly, by a
grate Authour, compared to
deep grounds in musicke, so cū-
ningly layd, as no discant of hu-
mane prayses, can neerly expresse
them.

A

Her

Her lineal discent from Dauid registred by two of the Euangelists, and her being Cosin to S. *Elizabeth* (as the Angell called her) do sufficiently assure vs, that her high and holy Pedigree was of Patriarchicall, Propheticall, Priestly, and Princely Progenitors iointly composed.

These foure sortes of Persons therein contayned, were as foure rootes, out of which, this flourishing branche of *Iesse* his tree, happily issued.

They were like to the foure Riuers flowing in Paradise, from whose cleare streames, meeting togeather, this inundation, and full of sea of heauenly graces (as we may rightly call this sacred Virgin) was deriued.

They were as foure Wheeles, on which this royall Chariot of Maiesty, and Loue, was brought

vnto vs, prepared for the King of
Heauens triumphant entrāce in-
to this world, to conquer Sinne,
Death, and Hell for vs.

She was (as *S. John Damascene*
from an Apostolical tradition as-
sureth vs) conceaued of barren
and aged Parents, that Grace
might preuayle aboue Nature, &
Lust haue no place in her holy
Conception. *S. Ieachim* and *S.
Anne* (sayth this holy Father)
were great Almes-giuers, and ve-
ry deuout persons, both to de-
serue at Gods hands, the blessing
of such a child; and that sanctity
likewise (as *S. Ambrose* writeth
of *S. John Baptist*) might descend,
as it were, hereditarily on her, in
whome the Authour of sanctity
was to be contayned.

An Angell is sayd to haue for-
tould her birth, by whome, the
ruines caused in heauen by the fal

of Angells were to be repayred.

Her Patents, hauing in pious vses, giuen away, the greatest part of their worldly substance, & liuing as they did in a remote Prouince of Palestine, and that poore Village of *Nazareth*, prepared, as it were, the way to our heauenly Redeemers poore Natiuity, and humble life, lead afterward among vs.

Of our B. Ladies immaculate Conception. [Chap. 2.]

AS Almighty God had elected this sacred Virgin, to the highest office, and greatest vnion with himselfe, which a pure creature could be assumed vnto: so did he no doubt, singularly prepare her therunto, by conferring on her proportionable graces.

For as from our Sauours high
title,

title, of being called the Son of God, *S. Paul* collecteth his infinite excellency aboue the Angels, only called Gods Ministers, and seruants: so may we in like manner from this B. Virgins soueraignetitle of being the mother of God, well gather her graces to haue been farre greater, then her diuine Father, Sonne, & Spouse had at any time before bestowed vpon the greatest of their seruants.

And, as she concurred in an especiall manner, to redeeme the world by communicating flesh, and bloud, to the heavenly Redeemer thereof, the high prices of our redemption: So did she (no doubt) singularly partake the fruites therof, & holiest manner of being by him redeemed. That whereas other soules, in their first creation & vnion with

bodies, contracte the hatefull
foulenes of originall sinne; she by
her sonnes sweet blessing, was fro
that fowle infection graciously
preserved: so as Nature, & Grace
began togeather in her, and hap-
pily conspired to make her cō-
plete, in naturall, and supernatu-
rall perfection.

As a bright starre of the sea,
according to the mysterious sig-
nification of her name; a heauen-
ly splendour in her first rising
did wonderfully adorne her.

the flowing spring, out of which
the flowing spring of all graces
was to rise; no filth of sinne did
euer defile her.

As a liuely, and most louely
tabernacle of the highest, she
was no sooner raysted, but the
seauen-headed lampe of the
Holy Ghost did flame in her:
and as a mysterious Arke placed

in

in the beautifull Temple of her body, her innocent soule, was with *Cherubims* wings, acts to wit of heavenly knowledge & loue, graced and protected.

Syria's King had no power to cast any of his deadly dartes, into this euer holy, and diuinely guarded *Hierusalem*.

This louely spouse of heavenly *Assuerus*, was from the rigorous penalty of his lawes, made not for her, but for ordinary subiects, graciously exempted.

The naturall, and immediate vnion which this sacred Virgin was to haue afterwards with her diuine sonne, preuayled far more with graces to enrich her, then her remote deriuation from *Adam*, sinfully to infect her.

Enes oldnes, had no place in this new womans cōception, ordained to be the gracious hel-

per of the sonne of God, in our heavenly regeneration, and in graces therfore to be likened vnto him.

And surely, that particular enmity, which Almighty God promised to place betweene her and Satan, in the hearing of our first parents, importeth her, to haue byn dearely vnited to the gracious Author of that promise, & neuer by any kinde of sinne enthralled to him, ouer whome by her sonne, she so gloriously triumphed: Pious eares, and harts abhorring to heare spokē, that this sacred mother of their heavenly Redeemer inherited sinne (as other children do) for her birth-right in this world, and became therby her enemies slaue, a child of wrath, hatefull to her diuine spouse, and guilty for a tyme of eternall damnation. No certainly

it

it could not be, but that he, who by abundant graces preserved her. (as all Catholiques belieue) from venially offending him, by a like, and indeed far lesse priuiledge of his loue, freed her also, from all mortall, and sinfull contagion.

Of our B. Ladies Nativity.

[Chap. 3.]

THIS dawning of our Eternall Day, (as the Church calleth the sacred Virgin) being cleared in her first rising, and brightly matled with that sunnes beames, which to illuminate the whole world, rose afterwards in her, *S. Annes* wombe, became as a quiet Oratory, for her to pray in, and render humble thankes to her diuine Lord, for his gracious fauours newly then conferred on

A s

her,

her, with such an infused kind of knowledge, as *S. Iohn Baptist* had, when in his mothers wōbe, at his Redeemers presence, he ioyfully exulted.

Her first graces actuall and habituall, were such (no doubt) as well became so diuine and liberall a Sonne, to bestow, for her first welcome into the world, vpon so deseruing a Mother, as he foresaw, she would be vnto him.

The Eternall Father likewise, began euen then, as his humble handmaid, graciously to respect her: and the subsisting spirit of Loue and Bounty, as his designed spouse, by wonderfull graces, to indeare her vnto him.

Angells, as their Lords future Mother, highly honoured this gracious Infant, and *Gabriell* a chiefe Prince amongst them, was then appointed, and most gladly

accepted

accepted to be a Guardian vnto her, by whose happy birth, and holy life, all mankind was to be graced and blessed.

Her Infancy, was (as we may well call it) a holy Exercise of Charity towards God, brought into the earth with her, dutifull Loue to her Blessed parents, and glad Patience in sustayning all infirmities common to children; resembling then in her innocent, and holy demeanures, the like carriages of her diuine Sonne, in his childhood afterwards: so as she had no wayward fancies, or childish passions, ordinarily proceeding from the vse of reason, and actual graces, wanting in other children: but Innocency graced her, from her first entrance amongst men, Purity consecrated her to her diuine spouse, Sanctity enriched her, Humility prepared

her to receaue from him frequent and wonderfull fauours, Modesty did set out her rare bewtyes, & made them more gracefull to such as beheld her.

Of our B. Ladies Presentation, and life in the Temple. [Chap. 4.

TH E mother of God, was in her tender yeares, to her own great comfort, and the merit of her holy Parents, planted (sayth *S. Iohn Damascene*) as a fruitfull Oliue in the house of God, to become fatned there, & to flourish with all graces.

As another *Hester*, she was translated, into heauenly *Assuens* Pallace, to be adorned there, sweetned, and made ready for his future embracements; where not *Egeus* the *Eunuch*, but *Gabriel*

a chiefe Angell with his glorious cōpanions, tenderly regarded her by the appointmēt of their Lord, and familiarized themselues with her.

Her life there (as *S. Ambrose* describeth it) was such, as she became therein, a mirrour to others of vertuous perfection. To her superiours (sayth he) she was humbly obedient, courteous to her inferiours, and mildly sweet to her equals; not eating oftner, or more at any tyme, then naturall necessity inforced her vnto; praying much, sleeping litle, and neuer so, but that her hart was waking in a manner the while; often interrupting, with holy thoughts, the repose of her senses.

Her bodily beauty, was like a flower, sweetned with internall graces, and blowne forth to the
fulnes

fulnes of corporall perfection, neuer faded much in earth, and in heauen now gloriously repayed.

Her holy Parents hauing enjoyed themselues, and yielded to the world, the blessing of such a child, happily departed this life (as great Authours haue coniectured) during her aboad in the Temple, because there is not in the Euangelicall History any mention at all of them; as certainly there would haue byn, had they byn liuing at, and after our Sauours Incarnation.

Of our B. Ladyes Esponsalls to S. Ioseph. [Chap. 5.

THis sacred pure Virgin lining amongst a carnall people, farre more respecting the blessing of
chil-

children by marriage, then vir-
ginall integrity, and perfection,
was about the 15. yeare of her age
by the will of them, who were
Rulers of the Temple, espoused
to a man of her owne Tribe, fit-
ly chosen, first by God, and
afterwards by them, as a husband
for her; ripe in yeares, chaste in
the profession of his life, & farre
excelling (sayth *S. Bernard*) as
well in the future dignity of his
office, as in heauenly sanctity,
that holy Patriarch, and best
beloued sonne of *Iacob*, whose
Name also he mysteriously en-
ioyed; a true heyre of *Davids* ver-
tues, whose Sonne the Angell
called him, and a man according
to Gods owne hart, much more
then he; worthy as a mortal man
could be, to deuide the name of a
Father with God himselfe, & to
haue, as a good and faythfull

Steward

Steward such heauenly treasures, as were the Incarnate Word, and his gracious Mother, recommended vnto him.

Her being so espoused, was (sayth *S. Hierome*) for the legitimation of our Sauours birth to the Iewes, and help of his education needfully required: and that also his being borne of a spotles Virgin, might be concealed from the diuell. Which reason allendged by great *Jgnatius*, who liued to know her and our Redeemer himselfe, seemeth to inferre, that neyther in the miraculous Conception of her child, or at any tyme after, infernall spirits dared to approach her, Angelically guarded, and like an Army ranged for a battayle, terrible vnto them.

Holy *Ioseph* was before marriage (as may be most probably ghesled) made acquainted with

her

her virginall vow, & being himselfe a Virgin purely and piously disposed, most willingly yielded thereunto, and resolved gladly to accompany her in the obseruance thereof.

They liued togeather at her poore house in *Nazareth S. Ioa-chims* Sheepcote (as *S. John Damascene* calleth it) first graced with the B. Virgins happy birth, and afterwards more highly dignified, by the diuine Words Incarnation, and life lead there from his returne out of Egypt, till after his Baptisme : so that, as a sacred monument of Christianity, and a sure testimony of our Sauiours pouerty, it was first by the Apostles themselues, conuerted into a Chappell, and since, not only preserved in the miserable ruines of *Palestine*, but from place to place, likewise

for

for the greater veneration thereof, by Angels translated. Deuout people come from seuerall Countreyes thronging vnto it; Princes haue with their votarie gifts & Donaries enriched it; miracles haue wonderfully graced it; and where now it remayneth, it is as a most precious Iewell, cabbined in a curious Couering of white marble, and hath belids a fayre Church built ouer it, wherein it standeth as a most holy *Sanctum Sanctorū*, breathing sanctity into the pious visitours thereof, and delighting (I doubt not) heauenly Creatures to behod it.

Of our B. Ladyes salutation by the Angell. [Chap. 6.]

THe sacred Virgin, and her holy Spouse, had not liued lōg together, but the fulnes of tyme

was

was come, (as *S. Paul* calleth the happy instant of our Sauiours Incarnation) when the diuine persons, sent a chiefe Prince of their Court, as a Paranymp, to salute this pure Mayden from themselves, and obtrayne her consent, to be diuinely fecundated by the holy Ghost, and haue the Eternall Word Incarnate within her.

Who, knowing the wonderful Excellency of her to whome he was sent, saluted her with the highest Titles, which could be giuen to an vnglorified Creature, saying, *Haile full of grace &c.* and he had further perchance dilated himselfe in her prayses, had she not by her humble feare, sweetly interrupted him.

Calling her *Mary*, familiarly afterwards (which at first for reuerence he did not) he made her to know him, with whome, she

had

had often, and familiarly conuersed before (as great Authours haue supposed , and is gathered from the Euangelists words) affirming her to haue byn troubled not as his sight, but at his speech, and high Titles, therein giuen vnto her.

Feare not (said he) thou hast found grace with God ; such a *Grace* indeed , as *Hester* found in *Assuerus* eyes , and hart togeather, when as a louely spouse, and Queene he meant to exalt her : Telling her further, that she shold conceaue in her wombe , and bring forth a Sonne promised by God (as the rest of his wordes do import :) foretould by his Prophets , *Isay* especially, whose very wordes he vsed vnto her ; diuine in himselfe, glorious likewise, & eternall in his kingdome.

How (sayd she) shall this be

done

done, because I know not man? Which question had byn idly made (as sundry ancient & great Fathers haue obserued) had she not byn debarred, by her virginnall vow, from knowing her husband.

When the Angell had cleared her difficulty, & told her, the diuine & pure māner of her sonnes conception; with great humility and deuotion, she threw herselfe, as it were, into the opened armes of her omnipotēt gracious Spouse to be purely imbraced, and fecundated, with admiration and loue yielding herself vnto him: Behold (said shee) *the handmaide of our Lord, be it vnto me, as you haue said.*

O Happy Turtles voyce (sayth *S. Bernard*) sweetly vttered heere in earth, yet working wonders in heauen, by causing forthwith Gods eternall sonne, to descend
from

from his Fathers bosome, into her sacred wombe, and therein to assume humane Nature personally vpon him.

Of the Eternall Word in her Blessed wombe. [Chap. 7.

I N this miraculous Conception of God, and Man, our heavenly Redeemer, not the Essence, but the manner only of humane generation was many wayes altered, and of the Virgins pure bloud a humane body was sodainly, and perfectly framed, but not vnited with a gracious, and glorified soule, then created also, before they were by the diuine Word personally assumed, that she maternally concurring in her sacred wombe to vnite them, might be the true mother of him that was perfect God, and perfect man, in

one

one Person vnited.

This Celestiall Babe, behoulding himself at that happy instāt, by created graces, and a diuine greatnes, aboue all creatures infinitely exalted, adored likewise by all the Quires of Angells, and ordained to redeeme mortalls, amongst all the designed children of glory, then presented before him; he first, and most especially beheld his holy Mother, in nature neereſt, in dignity chieſt, & in loue dearest vnto him, actually then prepared in an humble ardour of heauenly loue to receaue, what graces he would giue her, whose giſts no doubt, equalled his meaturelesſe loue towards her, and abundantly requited the hartly welcome ſhe gaue him.

And that her loue towards him naturally, as to her ſonne, and ſupernaturally as to her God, might

then

then and afterwards become happily increased; he is conceived by great Authors, to haue at that instant infused into her soule, a clearer sight of his personall Majesty and greatnes, then *Moyſes*, or any other Saint before her, enjoyed, lying in her wombe as a louely Bride in his marriage bed sweetly reposed; as a tree of life newly planted in this heauely Paradise; as a fragrant fayre flowre out of her flourishing braunches graciously budded; as a pretious Margarite in a cleere mother-pearle safely inclosed; finally as an amorous louer sweetly lulled in the Virgin-lappe of her, his chiefly beloued, corporally growing in her nature, and liberally communicating his spirituall giſts, and graces vnto her.

Of our B. Ladies visit of S. Elizabeth. [Chap. 8.

T His mayden-gracious - Mother was no sooner wakened out of her sweet traunce of loue, & diuine fecundity, but Humility prepared, and feruent Charity incited her to vndertake a paynfull iourney of 3. dayes trauell, ouer the craggy mountaynes of Iewry, to visit her aged Cosen S. Elizabeth in Hebron, and to sanctify S. John her sonnes Precursor, by the breath of her salutation; of which not the words, but effects are by the Euangelist declared, to haue byn heavenly light, and abundant graces, diuinely infused into the child first, and mother afterwards; which he with exultation, and she with outcries of ioy and loue, propheti-

B

cally

cally vttered, conioyning in her blessings this sacred mother, and her diuine son; as in nature then and loue she beheld them graciously vnited: *Blessed* (sayd she) *art thou amongst women, & blessed is the fruite of thy wombe.*

Blessed indeed in herselfe, as hauing the height of all created blessings bestowed vpon her; and blessed in her sonne, the flowing fountayne of them. He, as the fruit of life growing in her wōbe was blessed, and she was blessed as the tree that bore him: & surely such a heauely fruit, as the Incarnat Sonne of God was, could not but haue a tree of rare goodnes to produce him, since the goodnes of trees are by their fruites to be chiefly discerned. This diuine graine of corne falling from heauen into the earth according to his owne words in the Gho-

pell,

pell had no doubt, a fat, and fertile soyle to fall into; this pretious margarit of Heauen, had a cleere mother-pearle to breed it; this bright sonne of Iustice finally had a fayre dawning to rise in by his most resplendent beames, before other Saints mantled and adorned. *Whence is it* (sayd this Saint, admiring the B. Virgins Humility, and gratefull for her charity in comming to a person so much indignity and graces inferiour vnto her) *that the mother of my Lord, is come vnto me?*

S. Elizabeth was a great Saint, canonized and commēded highly with her husband by God himselfe; yet being humble & actually illuminated to know the dignity and wonderfull graces of her Cosin, she saw her owne sparkles by the others huge flames incomparably exceeded; her smal

light by the others suny brightness eclipsed ; and the mother of a Creature, by the blessed Parent of her Creatour and Redeemer himselfe, incomparably excelled.

Then gladly, & thankfully she acknowledged the holy effects in her child, and her selfe ; of her salvation , praysing her beliefe yielded to the Angells speeches , & prophetically assuring her, that all should be fulfilled , which he had tould her , concerning the greatnes of her sonne, redemption of the world by him, and glory of his kingdome.

*Of our B. Ladyes Canticle , and stay
with her Cosin S. Elizabeth .
[Chap. 9.]*

Saint Elizabeth is sayd to haue byn newly replenished with the Holy Ghost, before she spake to the mother of God ; so were

Zachary

Zachary her holy husband , and *Simeon* , before they brake out into their propheticall Canticles . But before the B. Virgin entred into hers, no new inspiration is mentioned ; to let vs thereby know, that she did no more therein, then a litle open the enriching Treasures of diuine Loue, and knowledge, hūbly by her before hidden , and euer concealed, but when in gratitude to the liberall Authour of them, she was sweetly enforced to discouer them . And as her Cofin had magnified her , so did she for them magnify her Lord : and as *S. Iohn* exulted in the wombe , so her spirit likewise exulted in God her Sauicour: an hūble Prophetesse afterwards (sayth *S. Basil*) of her owne future greatnes , and a deuout Preacher in the rest of her high Canticle of her Creatour prayles , and mer-

cyes, especially in sending his sonne graciously to redeeme vs. Behould (sayth she) from henceforth all Generations shall call me blessed, because he that is mighty hath done great things to mee &c. giuing vs to vnderstand, that holy soules euen to the worlds end, should admire Gods gracious goodnes towards her, and blesse not only him the Giuer, but her also the Receauer, of such wonderfull blessings.

Then sweetly delighted to vtter Gods mercifull loue to men, and dreadfull seuerity in rumbling downe the proud Angells from their high seates for offending him, shee concludeth her sacred Canticle, with a feruent and gratefull acknowledgement of that high Blessing of Blessings, which by her, he intended to his people.

She

She is sayd, to haue stayed, about three monethes with her Cosin, that this holy family, might lastingly enioy the comfort of her presence, whose first approach had byn the cause of such blessings vnto them; & that the little Champion (as *S. Ambrose* calleth *S. Iohn*) might be the more full annointed, and in the lappe and armes of this mayden, and gracious Mother of his diuine Redeemer, haue new graces breathed into him. For by the Ecclesiasticall order, of celebrating the feast of our Ladyes *Visitation* the day after *S. Iohns* Octaue, we are giuen to vnderstand, that she stayed with her Cosin, vntill the childe's circumcision.

Holy *Zachary* likewise, no stranger in his owne house, nor vnworthy to haue these secrets of heauen imparted vnto him,

may well be supposed, to haue heard, in his owne miraculous silence, the propheticall outcries of his wife, and mysterious Canticke of his Cosin, pōdering them deuoutly in his hart, vntill with his tongue in the circumcision of his child his speech was restored, and himselfe newly inspired to add his owne Cāticle vnto them.

Of our Saviours Incarnation manifested to S. Ioseph. [Chap. 10.]

AS the Mother of God, had eminent graces, and fauours heaped from heauen continually vpon her; so had she two excellent vertues, Humility to wit, & Taciturnity to hide them, which after her returne to *Nazareth* she holily exercised. For in a short tyme the happy growth of her diuine Babe, appeared in her
wombe,

wombe, and her sacred breasts, as pearly-bottels, tipped with rubyes, and filled from heauen, to nurse God himselfe, in humane nature, plainly discouered that to *S. Ioseph*, her louing and beloued Spouse, which she desired not to haue hidden from him.

Her knowne sanctity, & vowed purity of life, caused him not to suspect on the one side; any adulterous sacriledge to haue byn committed by her, more & more stil appearing gracious vnto him; yet seeing on the other side euident signes of her being with child, ignorant (sayth *S. Hierome*) of this high mystery, and holily resolved not to liue perplexedly with her, or to expose her to infamy, and death ordayned by the Iewish law for adulterous women, with a grieve (no doubt) proportionable to his great loue

towards her, and vnspeakable delight, which he tooke in her sweet society and presence, he resolved secretly, to leaue her: and she the while, though dearly respecting him, resolved not to satisfy him in his doubt, by reuealing, without a diuine warrant, such heavenly secrets reserved indeed by a heavenly messenger to be related vnto him.

Joseph sonne of David (said the Angell vnto him in his sleepe) *feare not to take Mary to thy wife, for that which is borne of her, is of the holy Ghost: she shall bring forth a Sonne, & thou shalt call his name IESVS, for he shall saue his people from their sinnes; ouerioying him* (no doubt) *by so happy a tidings, & comforting him far more, then his intended departure from so deare, and gracious a spouse, had formerly afflicted him; for*

then

then he foresawe, and with due thankfulnes acknowledged such wonderfull fauours, and diuine blessings, as by being husband to such a wife, and foster-Father to such a child, as was the Incarnate Sonne of God himselfe, and Redeemer of the world, would be heaped vpon him; making many feruent resolutions, with an awfull loue, & glad diligence from thence-forth to serue them; and vttering them in a ioyfull and louing maner to his Blessed spouse as humbly and thankfully accepting them. Such calmes after stormes, Almighty God is wont, for their triall, and merit, to bestow on his seruants, & children dearest vnto him.

Of our B. Ladies Expecting, & longing for the byrth of her Child. [Chap. II.

THe Indian Oysters vse to shut vp within their shells, Pearles which they haue bred, so fast, as without violence they open not theselues, to yield vp such treasures: But it was not so, in this sacred mother-pearle of Heauen, for as she had in her Virginnall wōbe, for the worlds redēption, diuinely conceaued her sonne; so was she for this high end, desirous to produce him. Whome she well knew to lye, as a rich treasure mined within her body, which should no sooner be brought to light, but other holy persōs, the sheephards for example, the 3. Kings, old Simeon, Anna, and many with them, would
to gea-

together with her selfe, come to be enriched holily, and happily by it.

Or like a burning cole buried vnder hot embers, he was inclosed in her wombe, which bared and layd open, would sparcle, & send forth flames, with which the whole world was afterwards to be fired, lightened, and purged, according to his owne words in the Gospell; *I came to send fire into the world, and what will I, but that it should be kindled?* Or like a rich Iewell he lay cabined vntill his birth in her, with whose gracious lustre, when it came to be exposed, men and Angells, were to be exceedingly and equally delighted: or finally like some delicious holosome fruite, he lay shelled, and vntasted, vntill he came by holy soules, to be relished, and fed vpon.

For

For her owne comfort also, this sacred Mother desired her sonnes birth, with vnspeakable longing, to see him, imbrace him, and performe all motherly duties vnto him, which whilst he lay in her pure wombe she could not. All that she could do there for him, was to adore him in his humility, yield the Enclosure of her body freely vnto him, embracing him as he lay within it, eating chiefly to sustayne him, esteeming herself happy in bearing him, and willing with her hart bloud, if she could, to haue yielded nutriment vnto him. Who was not dull the whilst, or careles in requiting her affectionate intertaynement; but as the sunne is wont more & more to mantle, & cleare the Easterne part of heaven, before his rising therein: so did this diuine fountayne

ayne of heauenly charity, illuminate, inflame, and adorne with his brightest beames, the soule of this sacred Virgin, before his rising from her, in our earthly Horizon.

Of our B. Ladies iourney to Bethleem. [Chap. 12.]

CÆsars Edict hastned obedient *Ioseph* and his humble spouse towards *Bethleem*, there to be enrolled, then a ruinous poore Village, and farre different from what it had byn, when great *Salomon*, as his fathers birth-place, with high wals, turrets, and stately pallaces guarded, graced and enriched it, yet neuer dignified the same so much, as did these poore strangers, by entring into it, and bringing with them *Israels* heauenly King, and great Cap-

ayne

tayne, to be borne there, as long before *Michas* had prophesied; so as it ioyed in an vnspeakable manner this holy couple, to know that they were now arriued, at the designed place of their Sones and Sauours natiuity.

Weary of their foot-iourney friendles, & as poore persons rejected at the Inne stored with richer guests, humbly & patiētly they betooke themselves to a poore stable, or Caue there (as *S. Hierome* calleth it) to beasts & beggars equally exposed; fitly chosen by the Sonne of God, notwithstanding, as mysteriously represēting the worlds estate darkened by infidelity, & with horrible sinnes abominably defiled, at his entrance into it. Expressing withall, the obscurity, and vncleanenesse of soules, before he come by heauenly graces,

to

to be borne within them , when
of foule stables , they become
cleane tabernacles for the diuine
persons to remayne in.

The pouerty likewise of the
place, and want of all things ther-
in, aptly yield exemplar docu-
ments to holy soules, of contem-
ning for his sake, pallaces, pōpes
& worldly commodities, which
this heavenly King for our me-
rit and example , as in his birth,
so throughout his whole life, vt-
terly wanted .

Of our B. Ladies Child-birth.

[Chap. 13.

Saint Bonauēture, in a holy cō-
templation of this sacred my-
stery , conceaueth the B. Virgin
being come to *Bethleem*, and en-
tered into the stable , to haue byn

excessi-

excessiue ly replenished with ioy that the long desired houre of her Diuine Sonnes Natiuity so neerly approached : and whilest prostrate on her knees in prayer, she delighted her soule with holy apprehensions thereof, and longing to behold him, he miraculously ascended out of her vnopened pure wombe, into her blessed armes, ready to imbrace him.

This high priuiledge (sayth *S. Bernard*) of being a mother, yet remayning still a Virgin, hauing byn for her singularly reserved, whose child was God & Man personally vnited, able in his power, & willing in his loue to preserve his Mother from all payne, impurity, and corruption: in so much as learned *Suarez* conceaueth the pure Nest, in which this diuine Phenix and heauenly

Bird

Bird of loue was hatched, and ripened for his birth, to remayne entirely yet preserved, as it was at his going out from it, that Angells intellectuallly, and Saintes corporally also may transparently in all eternity, and delightfully behold it.

Instead of midwife, & women to help her, Angels in their kings birth, gladly became his Adorers, and her Attendants; so that a poore stable, by the happy birth of this diuine Babe therein, was sodainly couerted into an Empyriall heauen; a hard crib in which she layd him, became this humble Kings bed of State to repose in; poore cloutes in place of purple robes serued to inuest him; and the papps of a poore maiden, filled from heauen then, as her wombe had byn before, serued to giue him sucke, who fed the
birds

birds of the ayre at that instant, and attyred the flowers of the field in their fayre and various beauties; neuer greater, then in being so lessened; neuer more glorious then in being so obscured; neuer more exalted, then in being so humbled; neuer more lovely, then in humane beauty assumed; neuer more powrefull, then in our infirmityes sustayned. Mercy moued him to vndertake the painefull taske of our Redemption, Wisedome guided him, Fortitude hartned him, and Charity moued him ardētly to imbrace whatsoeuer he saw needfull, or expedient to be done, or suffered therein for vs.

*Of our B. Ladyes intertayning
the shepheards in Bethleem.*

[Chap. 14.

THe Angells of heauen hauing
ioyfully themselues adored
their

their king, hastned into the fields of *Bethleem*, to make the poore shephards, there watching their flockes, sharers of ioyes with them. *Feare not* (said the chieft of them, appearing singly, and gloriously vnto them) *for I come to tell you a ioy which shall be to all people, because a Sauiour is borne vnto you this day in Bethleem; and forthwith to second these happy tydings, the whole Host of heauen, was seene trooping in the ayre, & heard to sing, in a mysterious canticle, the fruites of our Sauiours comming in earth and in heauen: Glory in the highest to God, and peace to men &c.*

And they were no sooner mounted vp to heauen, but the shephards hasted to *Bethleē*, where at the cribbe of Christ, they ioyfully vttered what the Angells had tould them. And our B. La-

dy,

dy, is said mysteriously by the Euangelist to haue conserued, and conferred all these things in her hart, aswell to illuminate & delight her soule, by a high, and amorous contéplation of them, as she did all the passages of her sonnes life afterwards: as also to be able, for the good of others, and instruction perchance of this Euangelist himselfe, afterwards to relate them: who professing (as he doth) in the beginning of his Ghospell, to haue collected the sacred verities therof from such, as had byn ministers from the beginning, & witnessles of them; we may well thence inferre him to haue receaued from this sacred Virgins mouth, all such particulers of our Sauours Incarnation, and infancy, as she alone could testify vnto him, ha-
uuing byn the chiefe, and happy

actour

actour in them, called therefore by sundry holy Fathers, *the Mistress of the Evangelists*: and S. Cyrill before his *Thesaurus upon S. Iohn*, wondreth not, that like an Eagle he soared aboue his fellowes, hauing had frō his Lords Grosse, this sacred Arke and rich treasury of heauenly knowledge recommended vnto him, who hauing liued with her diuine sonne, as his most inward, and wise secretary 30. yeares togeather, was all that tyme sitting, as it were, at a continuall banquet, gustfully feeding, & delighting her soule, with the heauenly viandes of his mysterious speeches, and actions, conserued still in her hart, & deuoutly considered.

of

*Of our Blessed Ladyes nursing, and
seruing her diuine Sonne.*

[Chap. 15.

AS it is certayne that our Sa-
uiour was complete in the
graces, and glory of his soule,
from the first instant of his hu-
mane conception, wanting only
that experimentall knowledge,
which was by degrees (as in vs) to
be gayned by the vse of his sen-
ses: so are we to conceaue this
diuine Babe, to haue byn wholly
free from all waywardnesse, vn-
cleannes, violency of passions,
fancies, and other childish im-
perfections, intuitiuely still be-
houlding those very objects,
which experimentally he learned.

And whereas other children,
by frequent aspects, come to
know the faces of their Mothers,

and

and beginne a naturall loue towards them, for continuall fauours receaued; this diuine child did not only exteriorly know his Mother, but interiourly also behold the humble thoughts, & enflamed affections of her soule towards him, her pure intentiōs, and harty gladnes in doing motherly offices vnto him, and according to the wonderfull merit of them with heaped graces presently requited them.

For surely they apprehend mealy the diuinesse of this child & Theandricall sublimity of his actions, who conceaue his huggings, kisses, and other like expressions of filiall loue towards his B. Mother, to haue byn no more, then fruiteles and naked signes of childish affectiōs: whereas indeed they were continuall breathings of new graces into

C

her

her soule, euer humble and prepared to receaue them.

Naturall & supernaturall loue sweetly conspired (no doubt) to indeare them to ech other; He, as his naturall mother, and most excellent Creature, humanly and diuinly affected her; and she, as her God, and Sonne respectfully adored, and delightfully serued him. Which harmony of mutuall loue, betweene them, neuer of her part sinfully interrupted, happily still increased; so as heauenly Creatures themselves, were delighted to behould him recreated, and her enriched, by their mutuall affections.

Of our B. Ladyes sorrow in her sonnes Circumcision. [Chap. 16.]

THe sonne of God was vpon the 8. day after his birth, in

the

the pure partes of his body, paynefully circumcised, that he might, as in the end, so in the beginning of his life shed painefully his blood for vs. For we are not to conceaue, that he who was aboute all lawes, and the Author of them, suffered this wound, because the Law commaunded him, but rather he made this law, that to fulfill the same, he might take an occasion, to be so wounded for vs.

This bloody ceremony, & sacramentall remedy of originall sinne in Male children, (arguing therefore Christs wonderfull humility in vndergoing it) was vsually performed in each parish by some Leuite, appointed by his officer to do it, and the house where the child was borne, was the ordinary place of performing it; so as the Blessed Virgin

may be conceaued, cōpassionatly to haue seene this first and painefull wound, made in the tender body of her sonne, as she did afterwards behould his last woundings, agonyes, and tormentes, hauing byn indeed not casually, but diuinely ordayned, to share in sufferings with him.

Lust, the beastly and ouer-common vice of men, was so hatefull to this heauenly Author of purity, and Sonne of an immaculate Virgin, as in the very entrance of his life, he seemed to proclayme war against it, by causing the pure partes of his owne body, to smart, and bleed, that from such a fountayne of grace opened in himself, his deuout children, from raging heates and impurities in theirs, might become afterwards cooled, and cleansed.

Neither was this wound only

paine-

painefully made, but (as we read of *Sichem* and his people) the stiffnes, and smarting payne therof continued many dayes after: so as we may well call this wound, a paynfull taft which our heauenly Redeemer was pleased to take, of his bitter, and deadly chalice; and a sharpe exercise of patience with-all, in his louing Mother, dressing this wound whilst it continued, and often bathing it, with flowing teares of tender compassion, as she did afterwards, his deeper, and deadlier woundes, suffering still in her soule his bodily torments.

Of our B. Ladyes imposing on her Sonne, the Name I E S V S.

[Chap. 17.

W Ith the sacramentall signe of Circumcision, children then

C 3

were

were wont to be enrolled in the number of Gods people; and because this name *I E S V S*, imported the saluation of mankind, he would not without shedding his bloud, whereby he was to redeeme vs, haue it imposed.

This Name, holy and high aboue all Names (as *S. Paul* telleth vs) was misteriously imposed vpon two *Iosua's*, or *Jesus'es*, types of our Sauiour in reducing Gods people from their first and second captiuitie; but commonly afterwards giuen to children, that the mysteriousestherof, might not become noted in him who was to performe the high office of sauing mankind, chiefly by it imported.

This name (*I E S V S*) reuealed by the Angell to the B. Virgin first, and to *S. Ioseph* afterwards, with the comfortable meaning

therof,

thereof, was as Oyle powred out, to mollify the griefe of his wound felt in her hart, and still to increase the gracious flame of her ardent loue towards him. It was like sweet Musicke in her eares, hony in her mouth, and a continuall iubily in her hart, to name it herselfe, or heare others name it. Her sons humane & diuine greatnes hauing byn mentioned by the Angell vnto her, for this end chiefly that she might cōceaeue the mysteriousnes of it.

All vertues exercised by him in the worke of our Redēption, his actions, his sufferings, and fruites of them, in earth, and in heauen, were continually to her by that holy name (Iesus) compendiously, and sweetely imported: so as wee may well affirme her, to haue begun that Veneration to this holy Name heere in

Earth, which is now to the same
in heauen also yielded.

*Of the Sages finding the Child
with the B. Virgin his Mo-
ther. [Chap. 18.*

T His humbled king of maiesty,
and greatnes, was pleased to
haue his poore birth graced by
the comming of Gentill Princes,
from the vtmost endes of the
Earth, by the conductiō of a my-
sterious and miraculous Star, in
Bethleem to adore him, not deba-
sed in their high thoughts, by
his pouerty, but appearing ther-
in, as a king of heauenly maiesty
and greatnes; purposely so hum-
bled, and disguised in humane
nature, afterwards to redeeme
them more louely and gracious,
whilst with adorations, pro-
strations, and giufts they testi-
fied

fied their faith in him.

And as the Childs greatnes, so his B. Mothers Excellency was discouered, no doubt, diuinely vnto them. Wherefore to intimate their ioyes, by behoulding her also increased, the Euangelist mysteriously telleth vs, that, *they found the child with Mary his Mother:* viewing him as the bright Sunne of heauen newly appearing in our earthly Horizon, and her as that cleere dawning which he had chosen to rise in. His gracious beames adorned her, and she with her naturall bewty had sweetly attired him; so as her liuely and louely forme, was in his humane face delightfully resembled.

Who in the silence of her sonne, became (as we may conceaue) his interpreter vnto them, and an humble relatour of such

myſterious verities, as in loue, & dewty, they deſired to know of him, concerning the miraculous manner of his Natiuity & Conception, and what the Angell had ſaid her, of his owne future glory, with the eternall greatnes of his kingdom: how likewise he had byn promiſed to the Patriarcks, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, & *Dauid* her propheticall Princely Father; foretold by the Prophets, and expected by faithfull holy ſoules throughout all generations, according to the words of her diuine Canticle formerly vttered.

She knew them to haue made a long iourney, and not likely to ſtay long with her Sonne, eſpecially after the Angell had warned them for their returne. Humility therfore, moued by charity, euer in holy ſoules (and

moſt

most eminently in her, then and afterwards) conioyned, yielded to disclose such heavenly secrets of her diuine Sonne vnto them, as might confirme their faith, & increase in abſence, their preſent loue towards him. So as we may well thinke, the day, and night which they ſpent in *Bethleem*, to haue byn a happy tyme, for their comfort, and inſtruction.

Of our B. Ladyes Purification.

[Chap. 19.

THis ſacred Virgin albeit in the Conception and birth of her child rather purified then defiled, went notwithstanding as other womē did, to be legally clenſed; carrying Chriſt into the Temple with her, there to be offered, and as other children ceremoniouſly redeemed. Who as the

Lord of the Temple himfelfe, meant therby to make the glory of this fecond houfe, greater then that of the firft, as had byn foretould by his Prophets, by being more highly graced and exalted by the corporall prefence of himfelfe in it: and that likewise fuch holy perfons, as *Saint Simeon*, & *Saint Anne* were, might happily enioy the promifed and blessed fight of him.

Simeon is faid to haue entred the Temple (in fpirit) diuinely, to wit, infpired, and taught to know, amongst fo many children, as were there continually prefented, the bright Sunne of heauen (albeit then in humane nature and pouerty wholly obfcured) ordayned to be afterwards a light to the Gentils, and the glory of his people, as he fung in his Canticle, whilst he

enjoyed

enjoyed the sweet comfort of holding Christ in his armes for a moment, which the blessed Virgin and her Spouse, for many whole yearès togeather, happily enjoyed.

And as if in ardent imbracings, and kissings of this diuine Babe, he desired to haue gasped out his holy soule into his sacred mouth, breathing sanctity into him, he cryed out to be dismissed, and let forth of this world, that he might not liue perchance to see this beloued and gracious Lord of his hart, persecuted in his Infancy, toyled in his life, calumniated in his actions, contradicted in his doctrines, hated by those whome he hartily loued, and finally to be, before his Mothers eyes butchered and disgraced.

So as he could not contayne

himselfe

himselfe amidst his rauishing contentments, from sadly fortelling their ioynt griefes & sufferings; *A sword of sorrow* (sayd he blessing the Mother of God, and her spouse) *shall passe through thy soule*; metaphorically so expressing that killing-wound, or rather those many deadly woundes, which shold be made in her soule by behoulding, as she did afterwards, her sonnes agonies, and torments: and insinuating withall, that noble kind of Martyrdom which she was to suffer, without other woundes, then such as Loue made, by vnitng her so neerly, and dearly to her sonne, as to feele in her very soule, by a strang kind of compassion, his corporall torments.

Of our Blessed Ladyes flight with her
Child into Egypt. [Gnap. 20.

THE Sages entrance into Hieru-
salem to seeke a new King,
troubled Herod, yet their priuate
departure homewards another
way, seemed to argue, that they
had not found him; but when
such holy Prophetically persons,
(as S. Simcon, and S. Anne were
knowne to haue byn) had so pu-
bliquely proclaymed him, this
bloudy Tyrant sent out his mur-
derous guardes, to kill all male
Children of two yeares old and
vnder, in, and about the Confines
of Bethleem.

When the Angell had fore-
warned S. Joseph in the night, of
this danger, Loue quickly awa-
kened him and his B. spouse, to
prouide for the safety of the child,

by

by flying into Egypt, as the Angell had appointed them. Pouer-ty eased their care of carrying much with them, & the darkenes of the night, serued fitly to hide them from dangers approaching. The strangenes of the Country which they were sent vnto, did not trouble them; the length of the way did not terrify them; nor any other difficulty dismay them occurring in their iourney, which they made through a sandy vast Defart so blessed thē (sayth *Baran-ius*) by our Sauours preſence as it became afterwards a holy, and solitary retyrement of innumerable Saintes, gladly leauing worldly noyses, & contentmēt, quietly there, and holily to ſerue him.

Their manner of carrying the child ſo long & pāynefull a iourney, may be ſuppoſed to haue

byn

byn no other, then beggars vse, when trussed at their bosome, or backes, from place to place, they carry their children. Idolls are sayd to haue falne downe (as *Dagon* before the *Arke*) and oracles to haue ceased, when the incarnate Word and heauenly Author of Truth in that Countrey appeared.

Theire entertaynmēt is by learned *Smarez*, conceaued to haue byn no other, then such as beggars are wont to receaue amōgst strangers, vntill *S. Joseph* by the exercise of his poore trade, was towards their reliefe, able to gayne something. The place of their aboad is sayd to haue byn neere *Ramasses*, a Citty built long before, by the Israelites hard labours, during their captiuitie: and in that place is yet shewed a well, wherein the B. Virgin is sayd
haue

haue washed her sonnes cloathes, watering a valley of Balme-trees, onely growing in that part of the Country, as if from that sanctified fountayne, the place had receaued a singular vertue.

The chiefe, and vnspeakable Comforts of these holy Parents in their exile, may be thought to haue byn, the gracefull growth of their diuine child, his wise speeches after he could speake, & louing behauiours towards the.

Of our B. Ladys returne, with her Child out of Egypt. [Chap. 21.]

Take the child (said the Angell the second tyme) and his Mother, and returne into the land of Israell, for they are dead that sought his life &c. omitting not to giue the sacred virgin her highest title, to wit of being Mother to such

a child, & insinuating withall by this manner of speaking (as learned *Swarcz*, with other great Authors obserueth) that this Blessed Saint was to respect her, not only as his wife, but as the Mother of his redeemer withall; who w^{it} a reuerentiall & hūble kind of glad loue, yielded accordingly his ready seruices vnto her.

Herod (as *Baronius* gathereth from *Iosephus*, & other Authors) dyed the 7. yeare after his murder of the Infants, at which tyme our Sauour could not be carried backe agayne in the armes of his Parents, as he had byn brought thither, nor well vndergoe the trauell of so long a iourney, but that his charity was such towards vs, as for our greater example, & merit, he would not in his very infancy from labours, and sufferings be spared.

His

His Parents returned with him to *Nazareth* a poore Village, seated in the cōfines of *Galile*, where till his Baptisme he liued so meanelly, as he was reputed no other then *S. Iosephs*, naturall Sonne, succeeding him afterwards in his poore trade, and labouring to make a plow, who was able without labour to haue created many worlds at that instant; praying with the *Nazarites*, & the whilst, as their God, prayed vnto by them; gazing with his humane glorious soule on the diuine persons, and intuitiuely behoulding all created Obiects. So as he gayned no knowledg, but experimentall from them, wherein with his yeares, he is by the holy Euangelist said to haue increased, and seemed exterioriously to mens eyes more and more gracious in his person, and behauiour, not

by

by any new graces gayned in his blessed soule, euer consummated in them, but in gracefull manifestations, and expressions of sanctity, and knowledge, ignorance being no defect of humane nature, needfull to be assumed by the sonne of God, to make & increase for our sinnes his intended satisfaction; but wholly indeed vnbeseming him, who was to be the heauenly teacher of soules, and to deliuer the highest verities, as a cleere behoulder of them more then all the Prophets before him, and able to secure and warrant, after an especiall manner, the infallible Authority of his speeches vnto vs.

With milliōs of holier thoughts, then ordinary Soules can conceaue, did his holy Parents continually behould him, and draw from all his gracious behaviours

and

and speaches (his B. Mother especially) as bees do gather sweet hony from flowres, new motiues & increase of loue towards him; and he the whilst, was delighted in no earthly obie& more, then to see the wonderfull effects of graces in her soule, & to behold modelled as it were, his owne vertues in her, as in *Archimedes* christall Sphere, the vast Orbes of heauen, & their seuerall motions were wonderfully expressed: her guifts and fauours continually from him reccaued, being no other indeed, then flowings of his fountayne, sparcles of his flame, & beames of his infinite brightness. Sinne for example, was repugnant in him, to the maiesty of his owne person, and she by her neere vnion with him, was from the same, or any inclinatio therevnto totally preserved. Acts of

vertues

vertue were Theandricall in him,
and by the dooers person infinitely dignified: and in her they were euer heroicall, and highly enobled by her wonderfull graces. Finally, as in his bodily bewty he was like to her; so did she in her soule resemble more & more his gracious perfections, that so in both sexes humane nature might become graced and exalted, as it had byn before vilified by sinne, and extremely debased.

Of our B. Ladyes finding her lost sonne in the Temple. [Chap. 22.]

I T was an yearely custome (as the Enangelist telleth vs) of Christ, and his Parents to celebrate as other deuout people did, their Easter in *Iherusalem*; the sonne of God being pleased so to dignify the Temple by his presence

sence therin, and grace those legall sacrifices, the types of his Passion.

The mysterious obseruances of that Feast ended, *S. Joseph* and his *B. Spouse* returned homewards, conceauing their diuine sonne, then 12. yeares old, to haue gone with their kinsfolkes, and neighbours out of the citty before them. Whome when at night they found not, with wearyed steps, & carefull thoughts, they returned backe againe, presently to seeke him, and after much labour and grieve, they found him the third day, amidst the Doctors of the Temple, by his wise demaundes wonderfully astonishing them.

His Mother, when she could come to speake cōueniently with him, with an humble expostulation of ioy and loue, asked him:

Sonne

Sonne why hast thou done so unto vs? as wisely knowing he was not absent, but by his owne will from them, thy Father and I, sorrowing did seeke thee: naming her Husband first, to expresse her humble loue, & respect towards him; and how her owne sorrow, by his afflictions had byn increased, whilst S. Ioseph by silence shewed his respect to them both, his aufull Reuerence restraining loue, from any such boldenes, as the B. Virgin with a greater right, and neuer but with his leaue & gracious allowance, vsed towards him.

Know you not (answered our B. Saviour) that I am to be in the things of my Father? Giuing them to to vnderstand, that for the seruice of his heavenly Father he had so stayed behind them: to teach perchance those Doctours

*D**and*

& guides of his people by occasiō of his wise questions, some profitable verities, fit to be knowne and taught to others by them; & that as the Iewes then, so now, wee might by such a glimse, conceaue his sunny brightnes, & those enriching treasures, of diuine wisdom & knowledge, which in his tendrest yeares, were hoarded vp in him.

We may also piously ghesse him, priuatly and alone in those 3. dayes of his absence to haue visited the holy places of his future sufferings, and with an vn-speakable ardour of loue, and prompt obedience, to haue made his primitiue offerings seuerally in them, and vented, in lasting prayers and prostrations, the feruent longings of his gracious soule, afterwards to vndergo them.

His Parents are said to haue wondred at his words, and the B. Virgin, to haue conserued and conferred them in her hart; that so we might come truly to know, that she did euer do so, letting none of her diuine Sonnes mysterious words and actions to passe, but that by conseruing them in her fresh memory, & pondering them deuoutly in her hart, she enriched and raysed her illuminated soule continually by them.

Of our B. Ladyes life with her sonne untill his Baptisme. [Chap. 23.]

THe Euāgelist concludeth our Sauours whole life, from his being found in the Temple vntill his Baptisme, in these words; *He returned with his Parents, to Nazareth, and was obedient vnto them; to wit, by a voluntary sub-*

mission of himself, and a louing readines to do what they would haue him: who priuy to his hidden maiesty and greatnes, with a louing boldenes, so cōmaunded him as their sonne, that as God the whilst, and their Redeemer, they humbly in their thoughts, and affections adored him.

Wherefore we may well cōceau the blessed order of that family, wherein three persons only liued, one of them diuine, and the other two eminently holy, exercising Humility, and Charity towards ech other; he in obeying, and they in commaunding him, for the glory of his Father, and future instruction of his seruāts, subiected vnto them.

He with filiall loue respected his gracious Mother as the naturall, and instrumentall cause of his humane being, omitting at

no tyme, the duty of a child towards her: and to *S. Ioseph* his reputed Father, he yielded a gratefull behauour for his many painfull labours, and fatherly offices towards him, with heaped graces (no doubt) and diuine fauours, from tyme to tyme, liberally requiting them.

Their liuing with him alone, as his secretaries and seruants, for 30. yeares together (for *S. Ioseph* may be thought, not to haue dyed long before our Sauours Baptisme) was as a long haruest of heavenly merits plentifully by them both (according to their abundant sowing) happily reaped. And as this sunne of heavenly brightenes, by doctrine, and examplar actions, did shyne to others with whome he conuersed after his Baptisme, for 3. yeares together: so with the like, and a

far greater clarity did he appeare
louely, and imitably gracious in
all his behauiours & speeches to
these two only, knowing his
greatnes, for 30. yeares together,
& conuersing domestically with
him, who were neither dull to
conceau, nor hard to belieue the
mysterious verity of his speeches
vnto them. And if that be true
which *Salomon* sayth, *that with
the good, a man shall be good*; how
good then were these two who
liued with goodnes it selfe, and
had their soules euer opened,
and prepared to receaue full
streames flowing from the foun-
taine therof, continually into
them?

And if our Sauour proclay-
med the eyes of his disciples hap-
py in hauing seene him, whome
so many Kings & Prophets had
desired to see, and could not; and
their

their eares likewise blessed in hearing his speeches: how happy, and blessed may we conceaue his holy Parents to haue byn, who with eyes and eares of soule and body together, more lastingly, clearly, and deuoutly beheld their diuine Sonne, pondering his mysterious speeches, and in their hartes (as it is sayd of the B. Virgin twice by the Euangelist) deeply, and delightfully considering them?

*Of the B. Virgins charitable sorrow,
for S. Iosephs death. [Chap. 24.]*

WHen this Blessed man dyed, cannot out of the Ghospell be any wayes gathered: Only it may most probably be ghesed, that our Sauour sent him to a happy rest, before he began his owne preaching & labours. The

place of his death is likest to haue
byn in *Nazareth*, where he liued,
and the circumstances therof are
vnknown further, then that as he
was a *just man*, aduanced to a dig-
nity more then Patriarchicall, in
being spouse to the Mother of
God, and Foster-father to the
incarnate Word himselfe; so was
his end no doubt blessed, and his
merits suitable vnto it.

And whereas we read of many
Saintes, so diuinely fauoured in
their sicknesse and death, as they
had their good Angells visibly
& comfortably attending them;
this Blessed man enioyed a far
greater priuiledge, when in his
sicknesse and death, the sonne of
God himselfe; and his gracious
mother, with a most charitable
diligēce were ready to performe
all seruiceable offices vnto him.

The disease of which he dyed,

seemeth

seemeth to haue byn old age, and the vluall infirmities thereof, increased perchance in him. by the hard labours of his life, as Pomegranuts vse to breake and fall to the ground, by the ouer-filling growth of their sweet kernells, to rise againe in a new spring afterwards.

And whereas holy Men are said to dye in our Lord; Blessed *S. Ioseph*, may be said to haue dyed in him after a higher manner; to wit, reposed in the armes & imbacements (as we may conceaue) of his heauenly Redeemer, his immaculate louing Spouse not fayling the whilst to close his dying eyes, to kisse his cold cheekes & with flowing streames of reares, to take her leaue of him by whome liuing she, & her diuine Sonne had byn so purely beloued, and faithfully serued.

His gracious soule was no sooner breathed out, but Angells there present ioyfully carryed it to the holy troopes of Patriarks, Prophets, and Saintes disceased before him, as their heavenly Redeemers Foster-father, to be honoured, imbraced, and ioyfully welcommed by them, whilst his Spouse & her diuine Sōne, caused his pure body, to be decently interred, & put into the earth; where perchance, it was from corruption graciously preserued, to be gloriously repayred in our Sauiours Resurrection, with other saintes bodies then miraculously rayfed; since no Saint deserued more then he, to accompany his God, and Sonne, at his first entrance into his heavenly Kingdome.

Of the Blessed Virgin, being in Cana
with her sonne at a wedding.

[Chap. 25.

After S. Joseph his death, the B.
Virgin lived alone with her
diuine sonne, flowing in heauen-
ly delights, then without a part-
ner, receaued continually from
him, vntill his going to be bap-
tized by S. Iohn in the Riuer of
Jordan: whence after his Bap-
tisme, fasting in the desert, and
calling of many disciples to fol-
low him, he returned into Galilee,
and was with his B. Mother at
Cana invited to a wedding, my-
steriously graced, & shewed not
to be sinfull (as some ancient He-
retiques affirmed) by the sacred
presence of two such guests, who
pleased to be present at the
same.

Whole wedding this was, is not known, but that the Brides were poore, may be well gathered, from their want of wine before the Dinner was ended: which want of theirs, being knowne by the mother of compassion, she came to her sonne, well knowing his diuine power to effect, & her owne graciouſnes to obtayne what she meant to aske of him, saying, *they haue no wine*, briefly intimating ſo their wantes, and her owne charitable deſires of relieuing them, to him, who without words did (ſhe doubted not) know them before hand, & would in his bounty there preſently redreſſe them.

His reply (*woman what is that to thee, and me?*) was not harſh (as *Caluin* wickedly affirmed) but myſterious; to let vs thereby know, that not her will (albeit

euer holy and pleasing vnto him) but the decree of his eternall Father did in doing miracles chiefly direct him. And by telling her (*that his houre was not yet come*) yet doing withall what she intreated him, he gaue vs sufficiētly to vnderstand, that her request made him to exercise, sooner the otherwise he would haue done, his miraculous power, in performing that charity which she intreated so of him; and by going afterwards to the wayters, and bidding them do whatsoeuer her Sonne commaunded them, she wisely and charitably prepared them (as Cardinall Tolet well noteth) not to hinder by their vnwillingnes; what she knew he intended, as hauing byn diuinely inspired to aske that miracle of him, and taught to know withall his manner of performing it, by

cauting, to wit, water to be drawn by the wayters, afterward into wine miraculously conuerted.

And the fruites of this first miracle so obtayned by her, are said to haue byn, the manifestation of her sonnes glory, & confirmation of his diisciples.

Of our B. Ladies going to dwell at Capharnaum, with her Son.

[Chap. 26.

O V^r B. Sauour, intending where he began to preach, to transferre his dwelling from *Nazareth* to *Capharnaum*, is sayd to haue taken his B. Mother with him, that mutually they might enioy each others company, and withall that such persons as were conuerted vnto him, might haue her a liuely mirrour of vertuous and exemplar perfection, conuersant with them.

So

So that this heavenly Sun of Iustice, shining heere on earth, had two *Maries*, bright starres indeed of the Sea (as their names importe) illustrated by him in their seuerall graces, and wayting louingly on him; the one euer a cleere mirrour of vnspotted perfectiō, the other a liuely patterne at length of hartie Contrition: Graces were in the one, as a bright sun-shine, neuer sinnefully cloyed; and in the other as a radiant sky from storms newly cleared. The one was as a full fountayne of liuing waters neuer defiled; & the other as a deepe well, freshly clenched, and filled. The one neuer wanted a rich patrimony of heavenly graces, still by her wonderfully increased; & the other had hers, once wasted, graciously agayne, and with a great increase happily restored; and both were

to him in their sweet societies especially delighfull, contemplating his speeches, and noting his actions, to enrich their soules holily by them; she especially, who from his childhood had byn accustomed to do so; considering his miraculous curing of diseased and miserable persons not onely as acts of gracious loue and mercy towards them, on whom they were wrought: but as misterious representations likewise, of the like spirituall wonders, which then, & after he meant to worke in soules, by his heavenly graces.

Honours likewise done, and thanks yielded vnto him, for benefits receaued, delighted her humble soule; not only because they were deservedly giuen vnto him, but for that wisely likewise she knew how liberally he meant afterwards to requite the. As cō-

trarily, his disgraces much grieved her, not only as iniuries done vnto him, who no wayes deserued them; but as they were great sinnes in such as did cōmit them, & meanes to increase their eternall damnation.

Of the woman blessing the wombe & paps of the B. Virgin. [Chap. 27.]

[T cannot be doubted, but that such as belieued Christ to be the sonne of God, and their heauenly Redeemer, highly also respected his gracious mother, louely in her person, and exemplarly holy in her cōuersation amongst them; inso much as a woman, ravished with the heauēly sweetnes of our Sauours words, and diuinely raysed in her thoughts to apprehend the blessednes of his Mother, vttered first that mysterious outcry, *Blessed is the wombe* that

that bore thee. & the paps which thou didst sucke; and since enlarged by the Church in that sweet versicle sung by her: Blessed are the bowells of Mary the Virgin, which carryed the sonne of the eternall Father; and Blessed be the pappes which nursed Christ our Lord: fulfilling therein her owne humble prophesy, that all generations should blesse her.

Neither did our B. Sauour in his reply to the woman, *Yea but blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it*, cōtradiēt the blessing of his mother; but (saith venerable Bede) was couertly pleased, to intimate a more high and imitable commendation of his Mother, for that she had not only corporally, but spiritually also conceaued him; wherby she deserued not the womans blessing alone, but to haue his own praises added vnto it.

For

For as learned Interpreters note
vpō this misterious passage of the
Ghospell, this sacred Virgin may
after two manners be conceived
to haue byn the Mother of God;
first barely, to wit, according to
his corporall Conception and
Natiuity, and so it was possible,
for her to haue byn his mother,
without any graces at all therby
obtayned; and secondly as she
was singularly chosen, and pre-
pared with wonderfull graces, to
that high office, of giuing a new
nature, life, and being to her om-
nipotent Creatour, for the glory
of himselfe, and redemption of
mortall Creatures; wherby she
was raysted to the highest digni-
ty, and greatest vnion with him-
selfe, which a pure Creature could
be assumed vnto: Gods vsuall
manner hauing euer byn as he
raysted his seruants to high dig-
nities,

nitie, to bestow on them suitable graces. And it were a most detestable wickednes to conceaue, that he dealt otherwise with his owne most sacred, and beloued mother, who as in Nature was neereft, so in Loue was no doubt, dearest vnto him.

It is true, indeed, that as his creature, she was tyed in duty to do all motherly offices and seruices vnto him, without any obligation on his part, in iustice to requite them: But supposing the gracious, and free tye of his owne liberall promises, not to let so much as a cuppe of cold water, giuen for his sake, passe vnrewarded, togeather with the dutifull loue and piety of children towards Parents, commaunded by himselfe, and accordingly, no doubt, obserued, may we not reasonably conceaue, & piously

assure

assure our selues, that he was neither in the piety of a louing child nor bounty of a gracious Lord, wanting vnto her, who not only gaue him the integrity of human nature, but spent her whole life afterwards, in motherly offices, and seruices towards him, for which other children can make to their parents no equall requittall.

- And supposing the sonne of God was able to rayse his most deseruing mother to what measure of sanctity, and heauenly nobility he would, for the good of her, and glory of himselfe, to whome she so neerely appertayned; why should any Christian, against the knowne goodnes of such a Lord, and sonne, doubte him actually to haue done so?

Of our B. Ladyes expecting her Son,
at the doore of a house in Capharnaum. Math. 12. [Chap. 28.

O Vr Sauour teaching & doing miracles within a house at *Capharnaum*, being told that his Mother, & Brethren (for so his Cosins are called in Scripture) stayed at the doore to speak with him; eyther not willing to be interrupted in his holy discourses, or glad rather of the occasion, to teach his Auditory a profitable lesson, to wit, how they also might spiritually become his Mother and Brethren, he extended his hands towards his Apostles, asking, *who is my mother, and who are my Brethren?* And then answering himselfe sayd, with an earnest asseueration to the future comfort, and instruction of his

ser.

seruants, He that heareth my words and keepeth them, he is my brother, my sister, and my mother.

Insinuating so, in the very order of his speech, by naming a mother last, the especiall neerenes of a mother to a child, and so consequently her dearenes to him, who not only in her body corporally, but spiritually also in her soule, had conceaued, nursed, and brought him vp, to a wonderfull ripenes of heauenly perfection; and waslike to become in others a fruitfull Parent, and Nurse afterwards of him, being by her examplar life, as a sweet odour to draw others into the bedchamber of her sonne (sayth *S. Ambrose*) to be espoused, & fecundated also diuinely by him.

Her motherly power sayth another deuout Author, hath byn the protection and helping of in-

nume-

numerable soules to grace and glory; her greatnes their gayne, her treasures their enrichings, by being able, and euer ready, to obtayne fauours & blessings for her sounes children, by himself therefore vpon his Crosse recommended vnto her.

So that they belōg not to him or her (as children or seruants) who haue vilified her in their thoughtes, and debased her in speeches, so farre as to teach, that her diuine Sonne, did in those former words blame her for interrupting him vnseasonably in his doctrine, and plainly to renounce her for his mother: whereas the Euangelist only affirmeth her, to haue stayed at the dore expecting him. And it proceeded out of the respect rather of others towards her, that he was tould of her being there, then

that

that of her selfe, she sought to
speake importunately vnto him.

And should she for iust causes
or not, haue done so, had it not
byn against the very duty of a
child towards a Parent (as she
was knowne to be vnto him,)
common discretion also, & mo-
rality it selfe, for so small a fault
scandalously and publicuely to
renounce her ?

O monsters of men and vipe-
rous brood of him whose head
she crushed happily for vs, that
dared (as some moderne hereti-
ques haue done) to utter such
horrid, and groundesse blasphe-
mies agaynst her ! Whome ac-
cording to the humble prophecy
of her selfe, all generations, of ho-
ly soules, ~~reuerend~~ and account
eternally Blessed, as well for those
great things, which Almighty
God, did vnto her selfe, as for

non

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those

those many & vnspeakable blessings likewise which by her he bestowed vpon vs.

Of our Blessed Ladies suffering with her sonne. [Chap. 29.

AS *Eue* (sayth *S. Austine*) was made to helpe *Adam*, in mans naturall propagation; so was the *B. Virgin* ordayned, to help the sonne of God in our supernaturall regeneration. Those two were our old, and these two our new Parents: they, threw vs miserably downe, from the happy estate of innocency to sinne; and these, to more then lost graces happily raysed vs. Humane nature was in them by sinne vilified and debased, in both sexes; but contrarily by these, wonderfully dignified and exalted.

The sonne of God by his pas-

E

sion

sion soly redeemed vs, as *Adam* by his fault only condemned vs: yet withall, as *Eue* our old mother by eating the forbidden fruit, & causing her husband to do the same, occasioned our ruine; so *Mary* our new mother, by beholding the fruit of her wombe fastned to the tree of the Crosse, happily cōcurred to our raysing; & by sustayning deadly sorrow, with her diuine Sonne in his death, recompenced, in a sort, the others fault, and satisfied for *Eues* sinfull sensualities, by her innocent sufferings.

For albeit she shed nor her bloud, nor had the faire Temple of her body, by woundes (as her Sonne was) lamentably defaced; yet suffered she a higher kind of martyrdome, when loue so vnit-
ed her vnto him, as his agonyes became hers, by a tender com-

passion, his griefes her dolours, his torments her tortures, his corporall woundings paynesfull rendings of her very soule, and sharpe thrusts of that piercing sword of sorrow, which good old *Simeon* had foretold her. So that she could not haue liued to the end of them, had she not byn supernaturally assisted, to offer jointly with him to his Eternall Father, that redemptory Sacrifice.

Iacobus Acosta in his booke *de Christo reuelato*, affirmeth the Royall Psalmist to haue sung the 19. Psalm in the person of this B. Virgin, standing vnder the Crosse of her sonne! Let our Lord heare thee in this day of thy tribulation; the name of Iacobs God protect thee. Let him send help vnto thee, from his sanctuary; and from Syon defend thee. Let him be mind-

full of thy whole sacrifice; and thy holocaust become a fat one. Let him give unto thee according to thyne owne hart; and confirme all thy counsell. We will reioyce in thy saluation &c. So that when in the Antiphone of Adment (sayth this deuout Author) the Church ordayneth me in her office to say before that Psalm, Maria dixit, I seeme to be thereby, warned, as in the person of this sacred Mother, and with a sad memory of her sufferings, under her sonnes Crosse, deuontly to pronounce it.

Of our B. Ladies last leane taken of her Sonne in Bethania the evening before his Passion. [Chap. 30.]

WE find not any where exprefsed in the Ghospell, that the mother of God, was with her sonne the day before his death in Bethania, as we read of S. Mary

Magdalens being there, and his Apostles with him: yet is there an insinuation, that other guests likewise were there present, amongst whome we cannot reasonably conceaue his B. mother, dearest aboue all vnto him, to haue byn excluded; or that he omitted his affectionate & last respect vnto her, appointed to share the next day in deadly agonies with him.

But piously rather & prudently we may conceaue him to haue armed her for his farewell, against griefe then approaching, by manifesting, first his Fathers holy will vnto her, and the mysterious causes of her sufferinges; secondly by telling her the happy fruites which were in heauen, and in earth to redound afterwards of them; and thirdly how she was with him selfe to be

glori-

glorified Eternally for them :
Counselling, and enabling her
by heavenly graces withall, to
carry her selfe, (as she did) man-
fully in them , when without
out-cryes, soundings, or other
passionate , and vnseemely ex-
pressions of her griefes, she stood
by his Crosse (as the Euangelist
telleth vs) letting downe silently
into her soule , the whole bit-
ternes of his Chalice , and ope-
ning as it were her brest , to re-
ceauē the saddest, and deadliest
stroakes which affliction could
lay vpon it.

His last words to her, were (as
we may conceaue) vttered with
teares , and sadde expressions of
loue and compassion towards her
for those innocent sufferinges
which were to be by his tormēt
soon afterwards occasioned. And
she for her last farewell to him,

may be thought to haue vttered
some such words as these, with
motherly & affectionate imbrac-
cings: Go my gracious sonne,
and heavenly Redeemer to pay
on thy paynfull Crosse, the high
price of our Eternall Redemp-
tion, wisely no doubt, and iustly
by thy diuine Father exacted.
Let this goodly Temple of thy
sacred body, framed of mine, and
miraculously raised, with bloud-
dy woundes in sight also of me
thy louing Mother, & obedient
Creature, be (as thy cruell Ad-
uersaries shall please) lamenta-
bly, and painefully defaced; for
now I can do no more motherly
offices and seruices for thee: I of-
fer heere my selfe willingly, to
suffer all extremities with thee.

of

Of our B. Ladies severall griefes in
her Sonnes passion. [Chap. 31.

A Sour B. Lady is expressly said
to haue stood neere to her
sonnes Crosse in the tyme of his
passion: so is it most probable,
that she sadly beheld him in all
his other publique torments, and
disgraces, fearing not as the o-
ther Iewes did to be defiled, by
entring the *Pretorian*, & *Courtes*
within it, sanctified by her sonns
presence, and sacred streames
painelessly in them effused.

So that the accusations vr-
ged by the Iewes to *Pilate*, and ioy-
ned with outcries against him,
were as dolefull & deadly sum-
mons of her sorrow. Disgracefull
cueltyes done by *Herod* after-
wards & his soldiars against him
were as vn-sheathings of that sharp

E s

sword

sword which afterwards pierced her hart. The loud blowes and bloudy stripes lametably tearing all partes of his body, were as wide rendings of her soule, and deadly piercings of sorrow.

His thorny Crowne did sharpen the swordes point, and make it enter more deeply; and finally *Pilats* sentence, was as the stroke of a deadly thunderbolt vnto her.

Her journey after her Sonne to mount Caluary, was to them both, mutually grieued for ech other, a dolefull processio, where the gaul giuen him, did increase the bitternes of her sorrowes; & when she saw his cloathes plucked off, and raggs of flesh cleaving vnto them, the smart of his woundes became in her soule freshly renewed; & when she saw him mercilesly throwne downe

on the hard bed of his Crosse, she also was cast downe into the lowest depth of griefe with him; & had euen her hart pierced with those very nayles, which entred into him.

Those bloudy streames which she saw running from him to the ground, and there trodden vnder the Hangmens feet, did make the woundes of her soule bleed freshly; so, as she became cooled at that sad spectacle, & had instantly died (as persons do, wounded in the hart) had she not byn, to see her sonnes sacrifice fully ended, supernaturally preserued.

The Iewes were mysteriously forbidden by their law, to boyle the Kid in his Dams milke: yet heere they did more, when they caused the child to be crucified in the sight, and hart of his Mother, by loue, and compassion

so neerly, and dearly (as she was)
vnited vnto him.

*Of Christs speech to his mother and
disciple, vpon the Crosse.*

[Chap. 32.

THis God of loue and mercy
(as we may well call him) ly-
ing bent like a bow on his Crosse,
was no sooner lifted from the
ground, but he began to dart vp-
wards, towards the bosome of
his Father, fiery and flaming ar-
rows of loue to him, & men to-
geather: first charitably excusing
and praying for his enemies, who
at the same instant blasphemed,
and derided him, *Father forgive
them for they know not what they do.*
Secondly, of tender and deare
compassion towards his B. mo-
ther, dying togeather with him,
woman (said he) behould thy sonne,

meaning

meaning *S. Iohn* standing by her; and then to him, *Behold thy Mother.*

He called her, *woman*, least by naming her *Mother*, he should haue moued the *Iewes* to outrages against her, and mysteriously insinuating her withall, to be that woman which was ordained to crush the *Serpents* head long before, and vtterly to vanquish him. And he so commended her for a mother to *S. Iohn*, as we also had a share (albeit after him) in this mysterious adoption; so that we haue reason to glory, & thake him for a double adoption: wherby he vouchsafed to make vs, as by his Father, so by his mother likewise, bretheren vnto him; that, to the dewty which all owe her, for being mother vnto himselfe, we might add filiall piety also, and

serui-

seruiceable loue, to her who was euen as a mother from his Crosse recommended, to obtayne graces of her sonne, and motherly blessings, temporall and eternall for vs.

Who indeed, if we consider the sad tyme, and circumstances of our adoption, whilst he with torments, and she with griefes were together languishing, we may be rightly called, as *Beniamin* was by his dying mother, *Benoni*, *Sonnes of sorrow*; yet children of her loue withall, if we consider, well that ardent Charity, with which her diuine sonne bequeathed vs for children vnto her; & that humble Loue, with which she accepted vs from him, actually dying then with herselfe, graciously to redeeme vs.

*Of our B. Ladies particular sorrow
in the death, and buriall of her
Sonne. [Chap. 33.*

O Vr B. Sauour hauing hung si-
lently on his Crosse for almost
three houres together, to tast
more quietly, and feelingly the
extremity of his torments (much
increased through the coldnes of
the ayre, darkened about him)
awakened himselfe, and his bles-
sed mother buried as it were in a
traunce of deadly sorrowes, to-
gether with him, by a loud com-
plaint made to his eternall Fa-
ther of being forsaken, and in
the sensitiue part of his humane
nature, left comfortles by him,
*O my God, my God, why hast thou
forsaken me?* and roused himselfe
vp withall to dye as it became
him, breathing out his euer-blef-

sed

fed soule *into the hands of his Father.* And whē his body was dead & cold, more new anguishes were added to her former griefes, by beholding euen his dead corps not spared, but with the wide piercing of a speare wounded then againe, and more then before lamentably defaced.

When he was taken downe from his Crosse, so as she might more neerly behold his wounds, kisse, and bath them with her teares, sorrow seemed to be brought neerer to her hart, and his mangled cold body to haue byn buried therein before it was embalmed, and layd in the sepulcher; leauing it when others did, but carrying home with her a liuely, & sad memory of all his sufferings, in silent and deepe thoughts mournfully reuoluing them; wanting not, whither she

went

went companions of affliction, & sorrowes to attend her.

So as Christs mother & friends returning from mount *Calvary* together, made a most dolefull proceſſion to S. Marks house ſeated vnder mount *Syon*, where the B. Virgin waſted with ſorrow, receaued ſuch comforts, as that aſſiſted family of friends could afford her. And S. *Iohn* not vnmindful that he had byn adopted her ſonne by his louing maſter, offered no doubt, with all loue & duty, filiall ſeruices vnto her.

Of our Saniours firſt apparition to his B. Mother. [Chap. 34.]

A Lmighty God is ſaid to wipe away teares from the eyes of his ſeruants; which he doth no otherwiſe, then by manifeſting vnto them objects of ioy, con-

trary

trary to the causes of their sorrowes; which also he performed towards his B. mother, early in the morning of his glorious Resurrection, when according to the multitude, and greatnes of her griefes, he reioyced her hart, with diuine, and vnspeakable comfort.

She is noted by holy Authors, not to haue gone with the other deuout women, to embalme her sonnes Body, as faithfully no doubt perswaded, that he would rise againe the third day, as formerly he had assured her, and confident withall so soone as he was risen, to be visited by him.

His apparition to her, is not by any Euangelist recounted, because a mothers testimony of so great a mystery, might haue byn suspected, and the circumstances of his apparition vnto
her,

her, were ouerhigh withall to be historically related, especially if learned *Suarez* coniecture thereof be true; that as she had sadly beheld, and accompanied him in his greatest humiliations, and afflictions; so likewise she ioyfully saw him in his highest glory and contentments, with a double trayne of Angells, and Saintes triumphant, attending him; amongst whome we may conceaue her gladly to haue scene, bodily also perchance ray-sed; her beloued pure spouse *S. Ioseph*, her holy Parents likewise, & others whome she had knowne before happily disceased: yielding likewise gratefully vnto her amongst the rest, as to the gracious mother of their Redeemer, due honors and prayses.

His five greater Woundes in his body still retayned, did shine

the_n

then as rich Rubyes, by their colour to adorne the louely candour and transparency thereof, and their depth therein did shew them to haue byn flowing fountaynes of graces, for vs once opened on the Crosse, and neuer agayne closed. The tearings likewise of the thornes and whips she saw beautifully in him, and gloriously repayred.

By his louing imbracings he caused heavenly languishings in her soule, & by kisses of his sacred mouth, he breathed new feruours, and graces into her: & as he appeared first after his Resurrection vnto her, so was he during his stay on earth, most frequently with her.

Neither had she at any time (as is sayd of others when he appeared vnto them) the eyes of eyther her body or soule restrained

from

from knowing, and delightfully beholding him.

Finally, as the world from her wombe, by his natiuity, receaued him: so did he in the day of his Ascension from her armes & imbrace ments ascend towards heauen.

Of our B. Ladyes receauing the holy Ghost. [Chap. 35.

Amongst the Apostles, and disciples remaining in Hierusalem, expecting, and preparing themselves to receauet that Diuine Paraclete and Spirit of truth, which our B. Sauour had promised to send to them after his Ascension, *S. Luke* affirmes the B. Virgin to haue byn one, saying after he had named the Apostles, *All these were persouering with one mynd in prayer, with the women, & Mary the*

Mother of I E S V S; numbring her last as the humblest amōgst them & naming her alone with her soveraygne Title, of the *Mother of Iesus*, to grace that holy assembly the more by the presence of so sacred a person amongst them.

That diuine Spirit of loue and goodnes, came to the rest, first with eminent gifts and graces to possesse them; but he had come to her, twice before, to wit, in the Cōception of her selfe, & her Son, & was both times abōdātly replenished by him. This heauēly builder came to rayse in them as from the ground a heauenly habitation for himselfe, and the other diuine persons; but he came to adorne her soule as a stately pallace already raysed, and accōplished by him.

This diuine Painter and beautifier of soules, began only to draw

draw in them a liuely and louely image of their gracious Redeemer; wheras he perfected his former draughts in her, & made her an admirable, and matchles maister-peece of heauenly perfection.

That working fire which Christ longed to kindle, and make to flame in the world, according to those his words, *I came to send fire into the world.* &c. descended on the Apostles & disciples, to consume those drossie imperfections for which their mild Lord, had frequently blamed them; but on her, euer pure and cleane, the gracious effects of his diuine presence were cleere illustrations, inflamed affections, and the highest gifts, which for any end he cold bestow vpon a Creature.

They finally as lesser vessells,

yet

yet great in respect of vs, were
sodainly and happily filled from
the flowing sea of all goodnes;
but she who had already contay-
ned within her, the euer full, and
flowing fountayne of all graces,
was as by a deeper tide, & larger
Channell which it had to runne
in, made a full sea, and a blissefull
depth of heavenly waters, flow-
ing fully into her.

If any one should curiously
aske me, what kind of graces
were heaped so on her? I can only
tell him, they were such as in the
happy Courie of her life after-
wards, might be vsfull, and as
the Mother of God, serue singu-
larly to enrich and exalt her.

old bus, anoissois humil
vns toi dindw, aing fiedid
-non a noqv wofed bloc sh bus

of

Of the aboad and manner of our B.
Ladies life, after her receauing
the holy Ghost. [Chap. 36.

S. Iohn speaking of this sacred
treasure recommended by his
dying Maister vnto him, telleth
vs, that he tooke her into his owne:
not that he had any worldly for-
tunes to bring her vnto, but that
he had a louing care to performe
all filiall duties vnto her; so that,
till the Apostles dispersiō abroad
she liued for the most at Hie-
rusalem with him, sustayned by
common almes, with other holy
widowes, and greatly delighted
in her pouerty, as formerly she
had byn: where it ioyed her no
lesse to see the zealous and fruit-
full labours of the Apostles, in
conuerting soules to the know-
ledge of her diuine Sonne, then

it comforted, and edified them all, to behold her humble and exemplar conuersation amongst them; blessing her pure wombe which had miraculously concealed their heavenly Redeemer, her Paps which had nursed him, her Hands which had cloathed him, and the other partes of her louely body, which had byn seruiceable vnto him. And the more they were illuminated to conceaue the diuine maiesty of their Lord, the more highly they apprehended her excellency, and with a reuerentiall loue, accordingly respected her.

Afterwards when *S. John* with the other Apostles left *Hierusalem*, he tooke this B. Virgin to *Ephesus* with him, (as the Fathers of the first Generall Counsell holden there, traditionally affirmed) where she was no doubt holily

deligh-

delighted, to behould Iewes and Gentillstogether with her sonns graces happily, and equally enriched; holpen, no doubt, in their first conuersions, and much recreated to behould this modell of perfection, and second light, ordayned to shine in heauen, conuersant most humbly, and exemplarly amongst them.

Neither were the holy places of *Palestine* so visited (as she is sayd to haue byn) by other deuout Christians; repaying thither to behold the mother of their Lord ready with an humble gladnes to welcome them, and to confirme them in their fayth, by relating many mysterious speeches, and passages of her sonnes life, which none, as an eye & eare witnesse, but her selfe, could deliuer vn-to them. And especially she is sayd, sweetly and frequently to

haue repeated vnto them these words of her diuine sonne, *Be you perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect*. A high lesson indeed, and by her fitly taught, who next vnto the heavenly Authour thereof practised the same, and liued so long after him for the comfort, & instruction of such holy soules as were by his Apostle (*S. John* especially) conuerted vnto him.

Of our B. Ladies manner of prayer.

[Chap. 37.

Payer (sayth *S. Augustine*) is as the breathing of holy soules, whereby they draw the pure ayre of heauēly graces into them. Light & Loue are the chief fruits thereof, and best meanes to perfect the same in vs: for Light increaseth Loue, and Loue when it is ardent augmenteth that hea-

uently

uenly Clarity, wherby it is produced; and by mutually intending ech other, both of them grow in holy foules to such perfection, as the one is seldom darkned, or the other cooled at any tyme so but that like Ouens frequently & thoroughly warmed with new fyres, they euer retayne great warmth, & holy seruour in them.

Their fancies in sleep often imitate their Vnderstanding, and borrow as it were from the rich store-houses of their memories, holy Objects, and Discourses, which as heauenly alarms do easily waken their wills, & make them interrupt often the repose of their senses, by breaking forth into holy aspiratiōs; as dry wood is with slender sparkles soone kindled, and inflamed.

This great guift of Prayer ar-

riued in the mother of God, with her other graces, to a wonderfull perfection: so as her Soule therein, was with a heauenly splendor, next to Beatificall Clarity it selfe, continually raysted; and her Loue naturall and supernaturall, to her God and Sonne, like two fiery wings, mounted her thoughts & affections more & more towards him, by whome they were inflamed.

An immaculate innocency of life added a most gracious sweetness to this rising rod of all heauenly perfums and spices sweetly composed. Humility raysted it, a pure Intention made way for it, and a constant perseuerance therein did surely obtayne what by her prayer she intended.

The high Attributes of God, and the sacred mysteries of her sonnes life and death, still conserued

ued in her memory, and conferred in her hart, as the Euangelist twice telleth vs, were the vsuall subiects therof; & her discourses therein, were free from all manner of distractions, and by heauenly illuminations cleared so, as like Eagles mounted to their high pitch aboue the cloudes, she soared with little labour, and became in them, euer sweetly, and diuinely inflamed.

Of the wonderfull merit of our B. Ladies actions. [Chap. 38.

[Earned *Snarez* writing of this subiect, frō certaine groundes of fayth and Philosophy, gathered so strong a conclusion concerning the B. Virgins wonderfull manner of meriting, and redoubling, by ech act, her former graces, as he dared not to publish

his doctrine, vntill the learned Diuines of *Spayne*, had with their opiniōs approoued it. The summe of his discourse is this.

As naturall habits are produced by naturall acts, when they are intense and perfect; so supernaturall habits are by the diuine infuser of them, conferred on holy soules, according to the perfection of those supernaturall acts, wherby holy soules merit an increase of them. Wherefore since the B. Virgin, did in ech holy act done by her, cooperate with former graces giuen her, fully, and according to their whole intention, as hauing no sinfull inclination to hinder her: so did she still merit, according to the full intention & perfection of her acts, to haue new graces infused into her, and consequently to haue former graces redoubied, by ech

one of them; so that she heaped in her soule houely, treasures of merits, and by them in the end of her life arrived to an immensity of graces.

Sinfull Ignorance did neuer darken her illuminated soule, Error seduce, or Malice corrupt her. Sense neuer rebelled against Reason; and Concupiscence the roote of sinne, was according to *S. Thomas* ever kept from growing, and totally at length extinguished in her. Wherby this heavenly *Sulamite*, became ordered in all vertues so, as a high Wisdom guided them in their severall operations, & Charity commanded them; wherby she came, as weighty things remayne in their Center, to be in them immoueably fixed.

Pride did at no tyme rayse her, or Pusillanimity deiect her. Pas-

sions did not perturb her, or sensuall Appetites disorder her. Sanctity did cleare, like a rich pearle, her gracious growth; and an Angelicall Purity of mind and body, did for her diuine spouse consecrate & spotlesly conserue her. Humility to conclude, made her ponderous in all actions, Obedience rounded her, and other graces smoothed her, in such sort, as finally she became in the, a rare, and matchlesse vnion of Created Perfection, doing all her actions in the substance, and circumstances of them, so, as it is a Catholique point of faith to be- lieue, she neuer offended, by omission, or commission venially in them.

Of our B. Ladies Sacramentall graces heere gayned. [Chap. 39.

Great Authors (*S. Clement* and others) haue affirmed our B.

Sauour

Sauour himselfe to haue baptized his Mother, aswell to bewtifie her soule by the fairest character of that Sacrament, as to take an occasion therby, besides the wonderfull merit of her owne actions, to heape in his owne bounty, on her soule, vnconceauable graces.

The descension of the Holy Ghost vpon her in the day of Pentecost, was as an eminent vntion, and Confirmation of her graces therein receaued, and the most holy sacrifice, & sacrament of her sonnes body & bloud daily with other Christians receaued, was as an euer-full, and flowing fountayne of heauenly blessings running into her.

Her oblation thereof in the Apostles hands, & preparation to receaue it, was suitable (no doubt) to the immensity of

actuall and habituall graces in her soule: their Clarity did illuminate her, their Feruour inflame her, Humility prostrated her, Piety disposed her, & faith made her so firmly to believe her sonnes glorious, albeit inuisible, presence therein, as if she had apparently beheld him; humbly thanking him in behalfe of her selfe, and vs also, for that second annihilating, as it were of himselfe, to communicate the fruites of his passion to faithfull soules worthily receauing him; frequently enioying glimpses almost of beatificall Clarity in selfe, as often as she sacramentally receaued him; he recompensing so, in a sorte, the wanted, and desired Comforts of his visibler presence with her.

And if *S. Mary Magdalen* in her holy ictyrement neere *Mor-*

sills,

sills in *France*, had bodily rapt^s, Angelicall visits, heavenly melody, and greater fauours, by her louing and beloued Lord, daily afforded her; can we reasonably doubt, but that in higher & more delightfull manners he expressed his loue to her, graciously aboue all Creatures indeared vnto him?

Or do so many authentick & vndoubted histories mention his glorious apparitions to other Saintes, men and woomen, for yielding them, yet aliue, particular comforts, and instructions; and may we not iustly conceaue him to haue byn more open-handed, and liberall, in shewing his loue to her, who best deserved such fauours, and had as a gracious Mother, from a louing Sonne, most right to receaue them?

Of our B. Ladies death. [Chap 40.]

Saint Denis not conuerted by S. Paul at Athens before the 16. yeare after our Sauours Passiō, (as *Baronius*, with *Snarez*, and other great Authors haue collected) & writing as he doth of his hauing byn at *Hierusalem* with S. Peter, S. Iohn and others aswell Apostles as chiefe disciples of our Sauour, at the death and funeral of this sacred Virgin, conuinceth her to haue liued well nigh 20. yeares after her Sonnes passion, to gayne no doubt a lōg & happy haruest of heauēly merits for her selfe, to comfort likewise the Apostles themselues in their holy labours, and to edify others by them conuerted by her gracefull person, exemplar life, & conuersation amongst them.

Her

Her happy end may be thought to haue byn prophetically reuealed to the Apostles, and disciples, that besides their mutuall comfort of seeing ech other, they might also enioy so contentfull a blessing, as to behould the ioyfull passage of this sacred mother to her diuine Sonne, take their last leaue of her, heere in this world, and celebrate her funerals with due loue and veneration.

The sicknes wherof she dyed may be thought to haue byn a rauishing excesse and sweet languishment of heauenly loue, and longinging to hasten to her sonne, calling her vnto him, *Come my beloned from Libanus, thou shalt be crowned*: which freely yielded vnto by her, might cause such a concurrence of vitall spirits, to rayse the thoughts and affections

of

of her soule, as they failed, to conferue a needfull disposition for life, in her bodily members and senses.

So as lying sweetly reposed on her bed, with all the Apostles, & many chiefe Disciples of her Sonne kneeling about her, ha-ving newly before, for a happy *viaticum* to heauen, most deuotely receaued him, whom first in her wombe, she had diuinely conceaued, with an vnexpressible ardour of loue, giuing her blessing, and farewell to all present, she breathed out her gracious soule into her Sonnes hands, there present to receauie it, waited on by the most glorious Princes of his Court, gladly attending him their Lord, and her his beloued mother, in their triumphat procession.

Of our B. Ladies Assumption.

[Chap. 41.]

Pious eares, and harts worthily
abhorre to heare spoken, that
corruption (sayth S. John Damascene)
inualed, and wormes deuoured
that sacred flesh, a part whereof
the Author himselfe of immortality
had assumed: or that this stately
branch of Iesses root, euer rotted
in the ground, whose flowre was
in Heauen so gloriously ripened:
or finally that this lonely Tabernacle
of the Highest became in the beu-
tiful frame therof, after death,
utterly dissolued.

No surely, as the same had
byn whilst it was alieue, many
wayes graced by her diuine
sonne: so was it, being dead from
loathsomnesse, and corruption
totally

totally preſerued, as for many reaſons it was fitting. Firſt, in that it had not byn with ſinne originally infected, as other bodies are, when ſoules void of grace are firſt vnited vnto them. Secondly for that it was euera moſt pure habitation of her gracious ſoule, neuer by it aſtually defiled, or viciously inclined. Thirdly, becauſe it had byn the ſubieſt of heavenly wonders for her Creatours glory, and mans eternall ſaluation, wrought happily in it, and ech part thereof made ſacred, by immediate touches, and ſeruices done to the Eternall Word Incarnate within it, and nurſed by it.

Her wombe for example was (as the Spouſe, for the wonderfull purity, and fertility thereof, calleth it in the Canticles) a Heape of heavenly Grayne, to

nouriſh

nourish soules eternally, with lillyes inuironed: a pure Nest, wherein the celestiaall *Phenix*, and Birde of Diuine Loue was hatched: the Tying-house wherein the sonne of God was for high ends humanely disguised; finally a Bed-chamber, richly prepared for the celestiaall Bride, to become therin, to our nature first, and to all holy soules afterwards, eternally espoused.

Her sacred breasts, were as two Pearly-bottels, tipped with rich rubies, and filled once from heauen, sweetly to nurse him, by whome (as the Church singeth in her Office) birds are fed, and all Creatures sustayned.

Her lappe was as an easy Couch wherein the sonne of God lay neere to her louing hart contentfully reposed.

Her armes and hands had byn

for

for many yeares together, holy instruments fitly made and moued, to imbrace, and serue him.

Her lipps were as two Ruby gates, at which her soule and her diuine sonnes had often met, & parlied with mutuall significations of loue, and new breathings from him of heauenly graces into her.

Her eyes had byn as cleare windowes, for her soule, delightfully to behould, for 33. yeares together, his corporall bewtyes and deepely to imprint in her hart a liuely, and louely image of him.

To conclude, all other parts of her virginall pure body, for seruiceable acts done to the omnipotent Authour therof, were by him after her death, highly respected (no doubt) gloriously perfected, and wonderfully exalted.

Of the glory of our B. Lady assumed.
[Chap 42.]

HEr sepulcher is sayd to haue
byn placed in the garden of
Gethsemani, wherein by the A-
postles and other chiefe disciples
of her Sonne, her body was so-
lemnely and deuoutly intombed.
And as flowers do smell sweetly
in their first buddings; so this
fayre flower, about to open it self
in its immortall beauty, yielded
to all present a heauely fragran-
cy (as *S. Iohn Damascene* from A-
postolicall tradition recounteth)
and sweetned that stony recepta-
cle, and part of the earth, whence
it was soone after into her sons
heauenly garden, to be glorious-
ly transplanted.

So that when the Apostolicall
intombers thereof had left it,

Ange-

Angelical spirits, as a sacred treasury cōserued it, & attended it vntill the third day, when it was by their Lord, and her Sonne ioyfully raysed, and with such a glorious change, as those celestiaall Princes wondred to see agayne in her, as before they had seene in their Lord, a clodd of earth so curiously molded, & graciously transformed, asking ech other, not as ignorant who she was, but admiring her greatnes: *Who is she that ascendeth from the desert, in delights, leaning on her beloued?* Delights indeed (*sayth S. Bernard*) abounding in her, and flowing still in earth and in heauen graciously from her, which can be no more exprest, then her glories described: fuitable no doubt to the graces of her soule, & such (*sayth he*) as well becomed so diuine a sonne to bestow vpon

so

to deseruing a mother.

His heauenly Father was likewise openhâded at the same tyme in heaping gracious fauours on her, who had byn Mother of his eternall sonne, and ioint-parent with himselfe of him, & the holy Ghost was effused no doubt in his bouÿty then to her, whom here on earth he had singularly espoused to himselfe, and made mother of a diuine child, first from him (saith S. Leo) in her soule, and afterwards in her wombe most graciously conceaued.

And as they had raysed her in the holy merits of her life far aboue all Creatures: so was she at her entrance into heauen highly inthroned, and supremely exalted for them.

of



Of our B. Ladyes Coronation.

[Chap. 43.]

THe Diademe with which this
Queene of Heauen was crow-
ned by her sonne, at her glorious
entrance into his Kingdome,
was in the riches thereof, suita-
ble (no doubt) to her wonder-
full merits, and graced with
twelue such Starrs, as adorned
the head of that mysterious wo-
man mentioned in the Apoca-
lyps, importing twelue peculiar
Graces, conferred by the diuine
Persons on her.

The first of them was, her ma-
ternall dignity, and office of ha-
uing the eternall word incarnate
within her, wherby she came to
haue a singular neerenes, and
dearenes vnto him.

The 2. was, her immaculate

con-

143-146 bound
with hand of real work

12
FASCICVLVS
MYRRHÆ.

OR

A briefe Treatise of our Lord
and Sauours Passion.

*Written by the R. Fa. I. F. of the
Society of JESVS.*



Permissu Superiorum. 1633.

Auct. P. Iuan. Falconer S. J.

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conception, happily therein beginning a rich haruest of heavenly merits, brought out of her mothers wombe into the world with her.

The 3. was, her preservation from venially offending afterwards, wherby she alone of all Adams naturall children equalled Angells themselves, in the vnspotted innocency of her life, as in the graces of her soule, she incomparably excelled them.

The 4. added an Excellency to the former, & arriued to the happiest effect of originall iustice it self, which was to feele no Cōcupiscence, or rebellion at all in her members & senses, but to haue nature and grace euer in her, harmoniously composed.

The 5. was, her virginall vow of Purity, wherby she consecrated herselfe to her Heauenly

G

spouse,

belongs to (1)

spouse; and before the Ghospell of her sonne, in this, and other graces arriued to the highest top of Euangelicall perfection.

To 6. was, the pure Conception, and manner of her sonnes Natiuity, a Priuiledge indeed (sayth *S. Bernard*) for Gods mother alone graciously reserued.

The 7. was, her hauing besides Fayth, and continuall Illustrations of heavenly Graces, in a most affectuous cleare manner, an experimentall knowledge of many chiefe mysteries of faith wrought by her Sonne; so as her selfe was with him an actor also in them, as his miraculous Conception, Natiuity &c. happily seruing to illuminate & inflame her.

The 9. was, naturall & supernaturall loue towards him, as to her God and sonne sweetly conioyned, & like two fiery wings,

rayning

rayning her loue incessantly towards him.

The 9. was, her life led for 30. yeares & more, inseparably with him, affording her houely occasions of doing motherly seruices immediately vnto him.

The 10. was, her great sufferings for him, & martyrdom finally with him, caused by Loue, making his wounds & torments her own by a most tender Compassion.

The 11. was, her happy end, graced by the Apostles present thereat, and much more highly honoured by her Sonnes personall readines to receaue her blessed Soule, recommended vnto him.

The 12. was her bodily Assumption after death, wherby she preuented the rayning of other Saints bodies in the generall resurrection, and came to be with a

complete fulnes of blessed ioyes,
eternally possessed.

Where I leaue thee (O sacred
Virgin, and gracious Mother of
my heavenly Redeemer) in the
bright Noone of thy glorious
Clarity neuer setting; in the ar-
dour of thy loue euer flaming;
and in the flowing of thy delights
neuer ebbing, but increasing still;
so as holpen by thy powerfull in-
tercession, I hope, albeit a farre of
as men gaze on the starres, to be-
hold thee on a stately Throne,
neere thy sonnes right hand glo-
riously exalted: purposing in the
meane tyme during my mortall
and miserable life, in all I may,
next to thy diuine sonne, my
Lord and Sauour himselte, to
honour and serue thee.

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